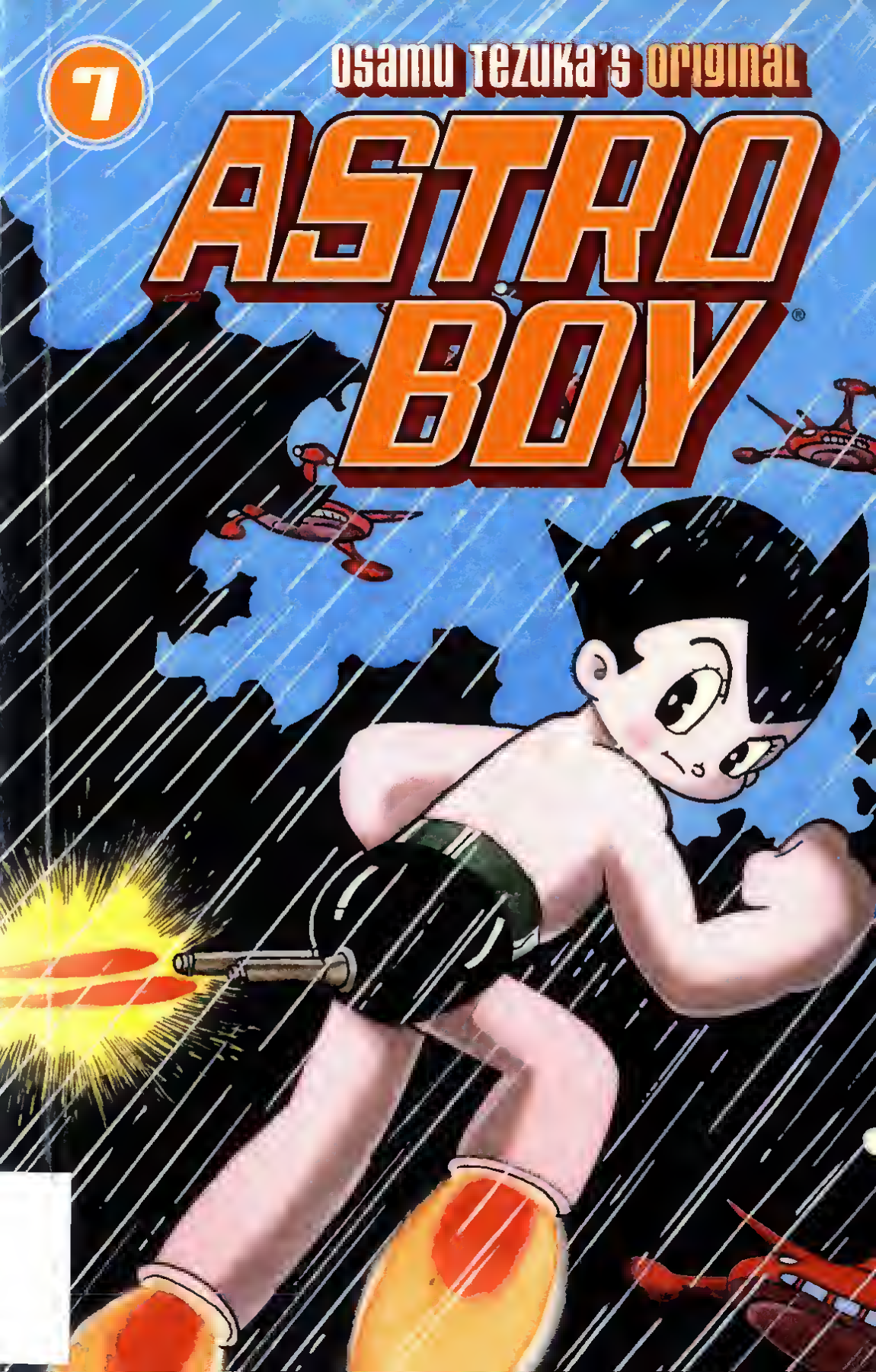
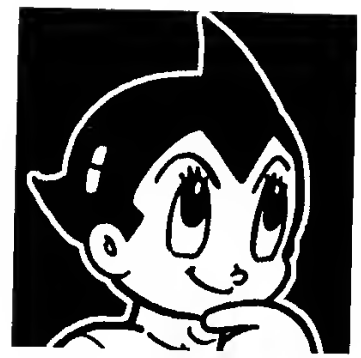
7

Osamu Tezuka's Original

ASTRO BOY®



From the infinite imagination of the revered Osamu Tezuka, *Astro Boy* shows the absolute excitement, wonder, and entertainment that only the true masters of graphic fiction can create. In this volume, Astro's adventures in the past continue when, after lying buried beneath the Mekong river during the Vietnam War, Astro is discovered and revived many years later in a time when robots are worked like slaves and discarded like broken toys. Teaming with the young and idealistic Dr. Ochanimizu, Astro fights for robot rights...and encounters his creator, Dr. Tenma, at the time of Astro's creation, a situation that could create a dangerous time paradox!



ASTRO BOY

7

by

Osamu Tezuka

Table of Contents

A NOTE TO READERS.....5

"ONCE UPON A TIME"
ASTRO BOY TALES, PART 2.....7

THE SUMMER OF 1993.....9

ROBOT CHIAUCHIAU IN DANGER.....41

ASTRO'S ENERGY RUNS OUT.....67

DR. TENMA.....97

THE TRAGEDY OF BRILEY.....137

ASTRO GOES TO THE CIRCUS.....165

"ONCE UPON A TIME" ASTRO BOY TALES, PART 2

First serialized from December 24th 1967 to September 27, 1968 in the *Sankei* newspaper.

The Story Thus Far

A spaceship carrying Scara, a woman from a planet of locust-like creatures, crashes and explodes in Tokyo Bay. The shock throws Scara and Astro Boy, who had come to the site to find out what had happened, into the fourth dimension. Astro finds himself not in the 21st century Tokyo in which he had been living, but in the 20th century, in 1969.

Astro meets a beggar boy named Shingo Yamanaka, who helps him survive in the city. He also runs into a doctor named Whitebeard, who is Mustachio's father, and a young Professor Ochanomizu, who is obsessed with creating a robot. But Astro realizes that unless his energy is replenished soon, he will stop functioning.

Hearing that a nation called Peakok has a hydrogen bomb guidance system that uses a robot, Astro resolves to meet the robot, who is named Baro. On the day the system is to be tested, Astro hides Baro in the ground, but when Baro hears that his creator, professor Carpon, has been murdered, he returns to the test site and is destroyed.

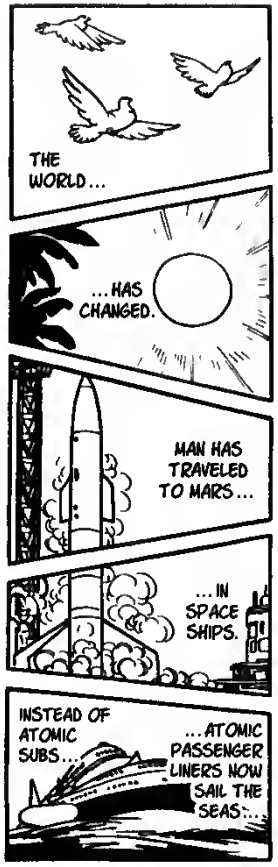
Scara, meanwhile, is unable to adjust to life in the city. She is lazy and fickle, with no particular desire to work, and she loves nature. Using a special device, she shrinks herself to the size of an insect and begins living on Mt. Tanigawa.

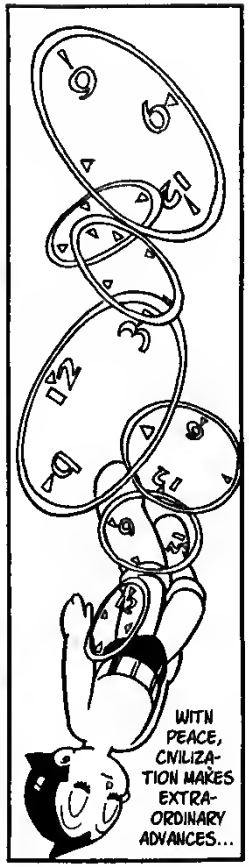
In the meantime, Astro is forced to flee from Ochanomizu's laboratory because Ochanomizu realizes that Astro is really a robot. But in a conspiracy, some nefarious characters secretly sell Astro to the U.S. military in Vietnam as a new secret weapon. When Astro finds out what has happened, he fights to protect the Vietnamese.

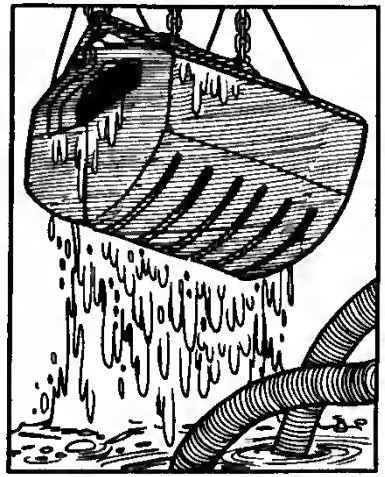
Finally, his energy exhausted, Astro floats to the bottom of the Mekong river....

THE SUMMER OF 1993

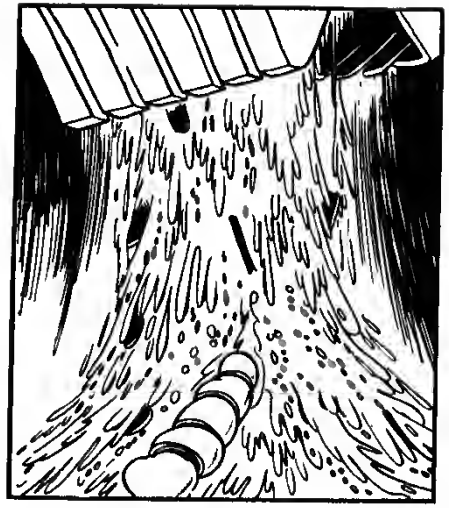
AFTER A LONG, LONG TIME, PEACE FINALLY RETURNS TO VIETNAM. FLOWERS BLOOM WHERE ONCE WERE ONLY ASHES, COVERING UP OLD BATTLEGROUNDS. PEOPLE RETURN TO THEIR HOMES AND VILLAGES AND ENJOY THE SIGHT OF DOVES AND PEACOCKS.

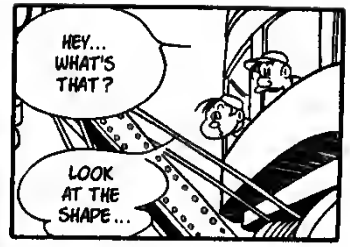


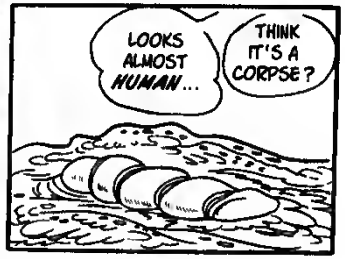


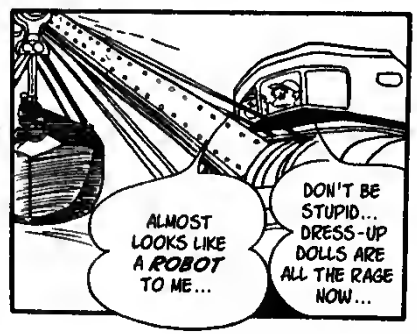


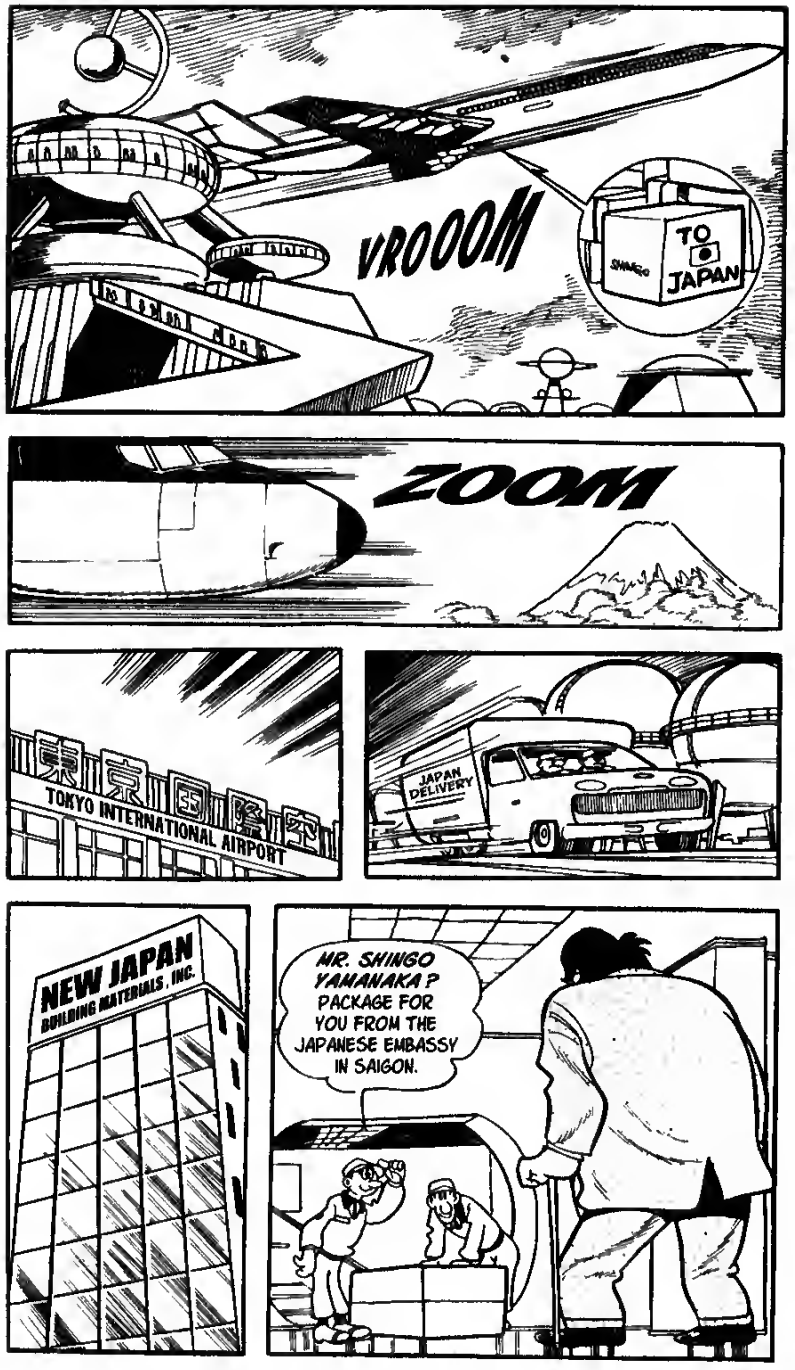
ONE DAY IN THE SUMMER OF 1993, WHEN A BARGE IS DOING DREDGING WORK IN THE MEKONG RIVER, ITS SHOVEL ACCIDENTALLY SCOOPS UP *ASTRO BOY*'S WRAPPED FORM ALONG WITH THE RIVER'S MUD.







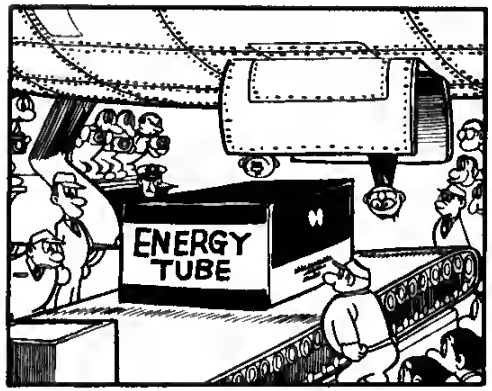



VROOOM
TO JAPAN
SHINGO
ZOOM
東京国際空港
TOKYO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT
JAPAN DELIVERY
NEW JAPAN
BUILDING MATERIALS, INC.
MR. SHINGO YAMANAKA? PACKAGE FOR YOU FROM THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN SAIGON.

A PACKAGE FOR ME? FROM SAIGON?
WONDER WHAT IT IS? LET'S OPEN IT, MEN...
ASTRO!!
ASTRO! AFTER ALL THESE YEARS!
?
?
HOW COME SOMEBODY'S SENDING YOU A DOLL, BOSS?
OH, ER, IT'S A FAMILY HEIRLOOM I LOST A LONG TIME AGO...
SOMEBODY TAKE THE BOX TO MY OFFICE...
BE CAREFUL WITH IT, THOUGH... DON'T TOUCH THE DOLL!

PRESIDENT'S OFFICE
JUST THE TWO OF US HERE, ASTRO... IT'S BEEN OVER TWENTY YEARS!
I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS!
I LOOKED ALL OVER FOR YOU AFTER YOU TOOK OFF!
I NEVER THOUGHT YOU'D MAKE IT BACK FROM VIETNAM!
THUD
ASTRO...
AFTER THAT I TRIED TO BETTER MYSELF. I BECAME THE PRESIDENT OF A JUNK COLLECTION COMPANY...
THEN I CAME UP WITH THE IDEA FOR A MAJOR BUSINESS...
WE'RE USING SCRAP AND GARBAGE FROM ALL OVER JAPAN TO FILL IN PART OF TOKYO BAY.
"WE'RE GOING TO BUILD A NEW CITY ON THE LANDFILL!"
IT TOOK OVER TWENTY YEARS, BUT IT PAID OFF.
I'VE GOT POWER AND MONEY NOW...
...AND I'M GOING TO USE IT TO BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE... EVEN IF IT'S ONLY FOR A DAY!

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU'RE BROKEN OR JUST OUT OF ENERGY, ASTRO.
EVERYTHING SEEMS OK...
I KNOW YOU SAID THERE'S A VALVE ABOVE YOUR REAR TO INJECT ENERGY...
HERE IT IS...
BUZZ BUZZ
HOW CAN I HELP, BOSS?
LISTEN, YOU'RE THE MANAGING DIRECTOR. DOES ANYONE SELL ATOMIC ENERGY TUBES FOR ROBOTS?
WELL, A U.S. ROBOT VENDOR SELLS THEM, BUT THEY'RE AWFULLY EXPENSIVE...
I DON'T CARE ABOUT THE PRICE! ORDER ME ONE!
B-BUT WHAT'LL YOU USE IT FOR, SIR?
THE COMPANY DOESN'T HAVE THE BUDGET FOR SOMETHING LIKE THAT...
HMPH ...
JUST BUY THE BLASTED THING! I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE MONEY SOMEHOW!
YESSIR...
QUICK! GET ME U.R.U. IN THE U.S.!!
WHAT A WASTE OF MONEY ...



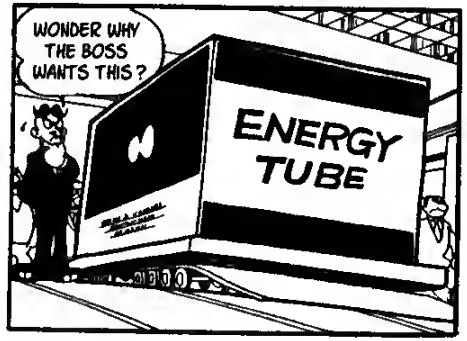
THREE DAYS LATER AN ATOMIC ENERGY TUBE ARRIVED AT TOKYO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT. IT ATTRACTED A GREAT DEAL OF ATTENTION.

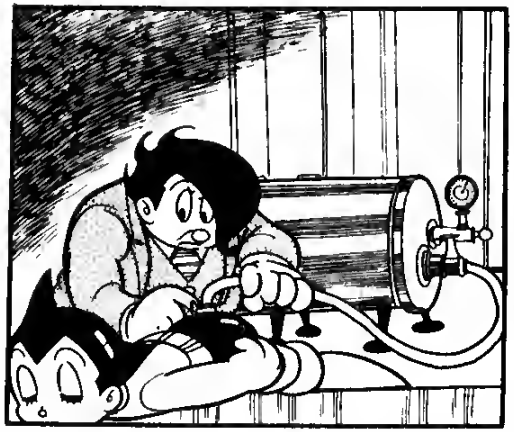
"SO THIS IS HOW ROBOTS ARE REFUELED!!"

"I HEARD IT COST A FORTUNE!"

"I WONDER HOW IT'S GONNA BE USED...?"

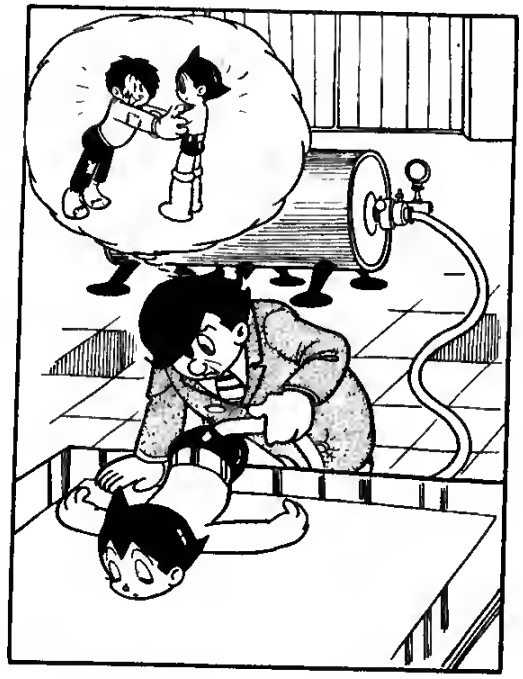
OF COURSE, BY THE EARLY 1990s THERE WERE ALREADY MANY VASTLY IMPROVED ROBOTS IN USE, BUT ROBOTS WERE STILL REGARDED AS MERE TOOLS. THEY WERE MACHINES THAT LITERALLY CARRIED OUT THEIR MASTERS' ORDERS AND, IN REALITY, WERE LITTLE MORE THAN ADVANCED CALCULATORS...

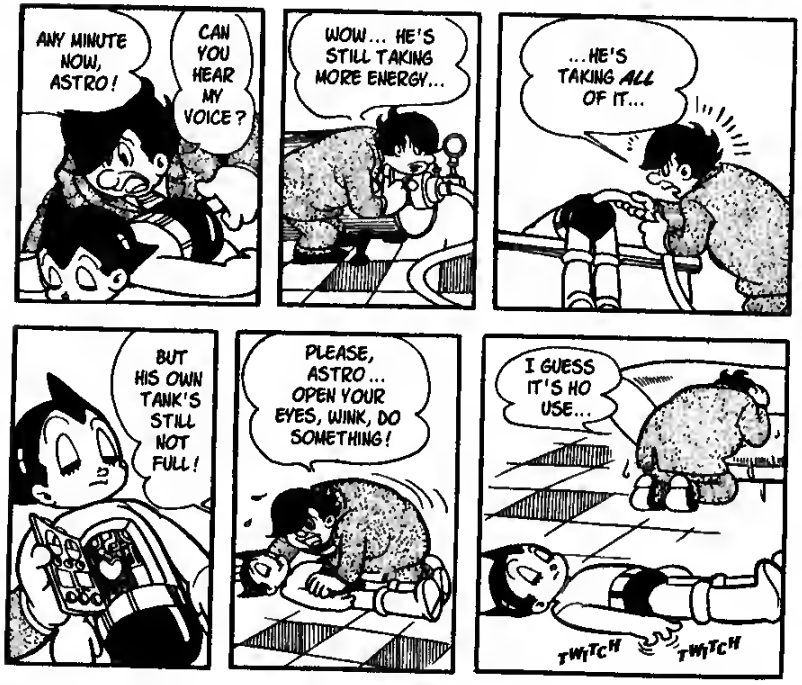




IN THE EARLY 1990s ONLY HIGHLY SPECIALIZED WORKER ROBOTS--SUCH AS THOSE USED IN SPACE DEVELOPMENT--USED ENERGY TUBES. SHINGO YAMANAKA THEREFORE LOCKED THE DOOR TO HIS OFFICE, EXTENDED THE MACHINE'S TUBE, AND CAREFULLY ATTACHED IT TO THE VALVE IN ASTRO'S REAR.

SHINGO STARTED THINKING HOW, OVER TWENTY YEARS AGO, HE HAD MET ASTRO ONE EVENING, BEEN SHOCKED TO DISCOVER HE WAS A ROBOT, BUT DEVELOPED A STRONG FRIENDSHIP WITH HIM. IT HAD BEEN JUST LIKE BEING FRIENDS WITH A HUMAN BOY. HE GREW NOSTALGIC AT THE THOUGHT.



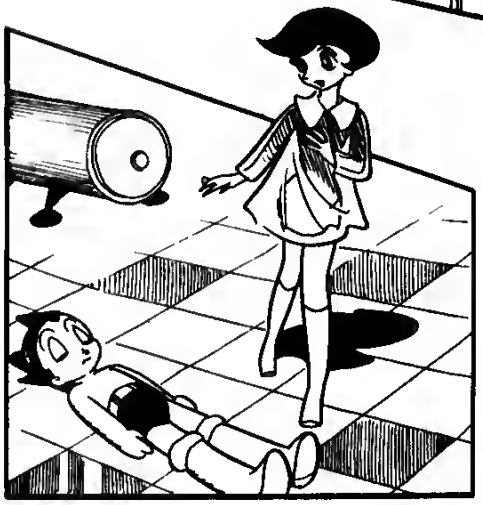

ANY MINUTE NOW, ASTRO!
CAN YOU HEAR MY VOICE?
WOW... HE'S STILL TAKING MORE ENERGY...
...HE'S TAKING ALL OF IT...
BUT HIS OWN TANK'S STILL NOT FULL!
PLEASE, ASTRO... OPEN YOUR EYES, WINK, DO SOMETHING!
I GUESS IT'S NO USE...
TWITCH
TWITCH

TWITCH
TWITCH
.....
I GUESS YOU REALLY ARE BROKEN...
SO IT'S USELESS GIVING YOU NEW ENERGY...
ASTRO!! YOU'VE COME BACK TO LIFE!! NOORAY!
NO...
ARE YOU THE PERSON WHO HELPED ME?
Y...YOU MUST BE MISTAKEN, MISTER... I DON'T KNOW YOU!!

LOOK CAREFULLY, ASTRO! IT'S ME! SHIN-CHAN!
SHIN-CHAN? THE BEGGAR BOY?!
YEAH. I'M 38 YEARS OLD NOW!
SHIN-CHAN!! GOSH, YOU'VE AGED! I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE YOU, EVEN WITH MY ELECTRO-BRAIN!
IT'S NO WONDER, ASTRO... IT'S BEEN TWENTY-FOUR YEARS! IT'S 1993 NOW!
TWENTY-FOUR YEARS?
RIGHT... UNLIKE ROBOTS, WE HUMANS GROW OLDER... WE HAVE LIMITED LIVES...
I'M JUST GLAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN! ANY LONGER 'N I MIGHT'VE BEEN DEAD...
BUZZZ
UH OH... LIE DOWN AGAIN 'N STAY STILL, ASTRO! I DON'T WANT ANYONE TO SEE YOU ON THIS INTER-VIDEO!
NOBODY HERE KNOWS YOU'RE REALLY A ROBOT!
WHAT IS IT? I'M BUSY RIGHT NOW!
YOUR DAUGHTER'S HERE TO SEE YOU, SIR...
MY DAUGHTER? HERE NOW?!

BEFORE THE INTER-VIDEO CUT OFF, A LIVELY YOUNG GIRL STRODE INTO SHIN-CHAN'S OFFICE, GREETING HIM WITH A *"HI, DADDY!"*

"SURUME!" SHIN-CHAN SAID, HIS HEART POUNDING, "LISTEN, YOU MAY BE THE *PRESIDENT'S DAUGHTER*, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST BARGE IN HERE WHENEVER YOU WANT!"



SURUME IGNORED HIM AND LOOKED AROUND THE ROOM. "GOSH, DADDY! WHAT A CUTE DOLL YOU'VE GOT HERE! CAN I HAVE IT?"

"ARE YOU KIDDING? THAT'S A SPECIAL GIFT, JUST SENT TO ME FROM THE JAPANESE EMBASSY IN VIETNAM!"

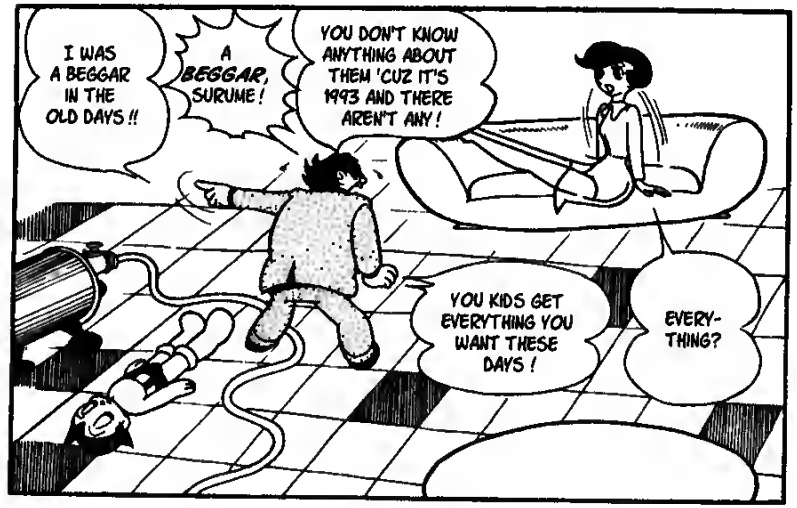
"SO IT'S YOURS, RIGHT, DADDY?"

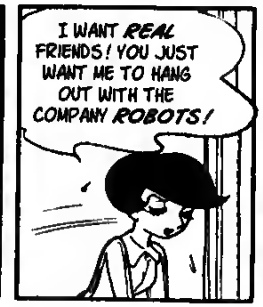
"WELL, SORT OF..."

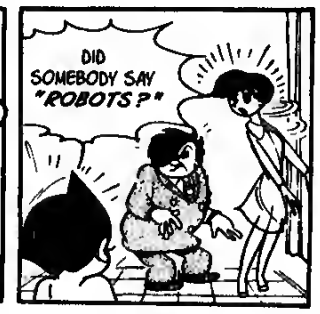
"WHAT'S WRONG WITH GIVING IT TO ME, THEN?"

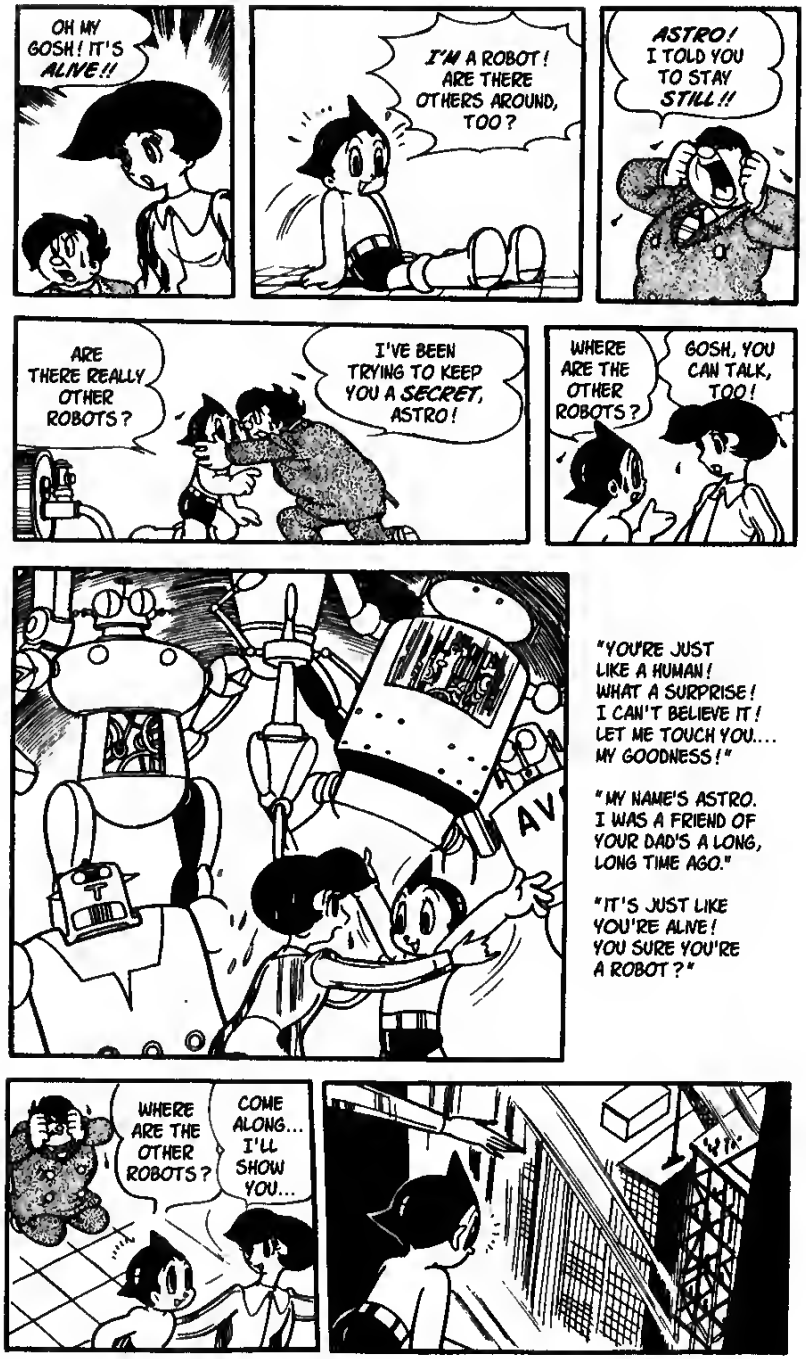
"NO! THIS DOLL MEANS A LOT TO ME! I'LL BUY YOU SOMETHING JUST AS GOOD!"

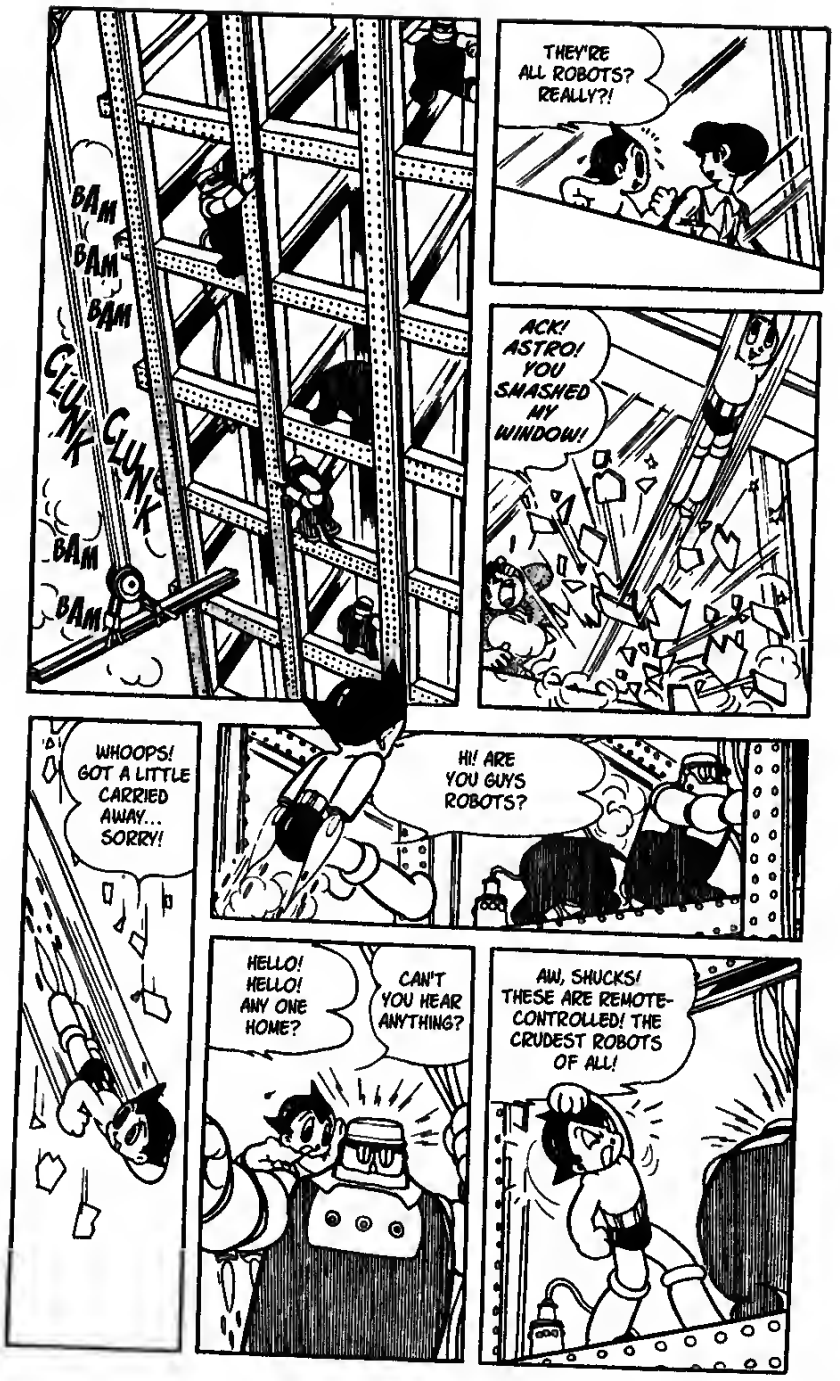
"BUT I WANT *THIS* DOLL... AND I'M NOT GOING HOME UNTIL YOU LET ME HAVE IT!"

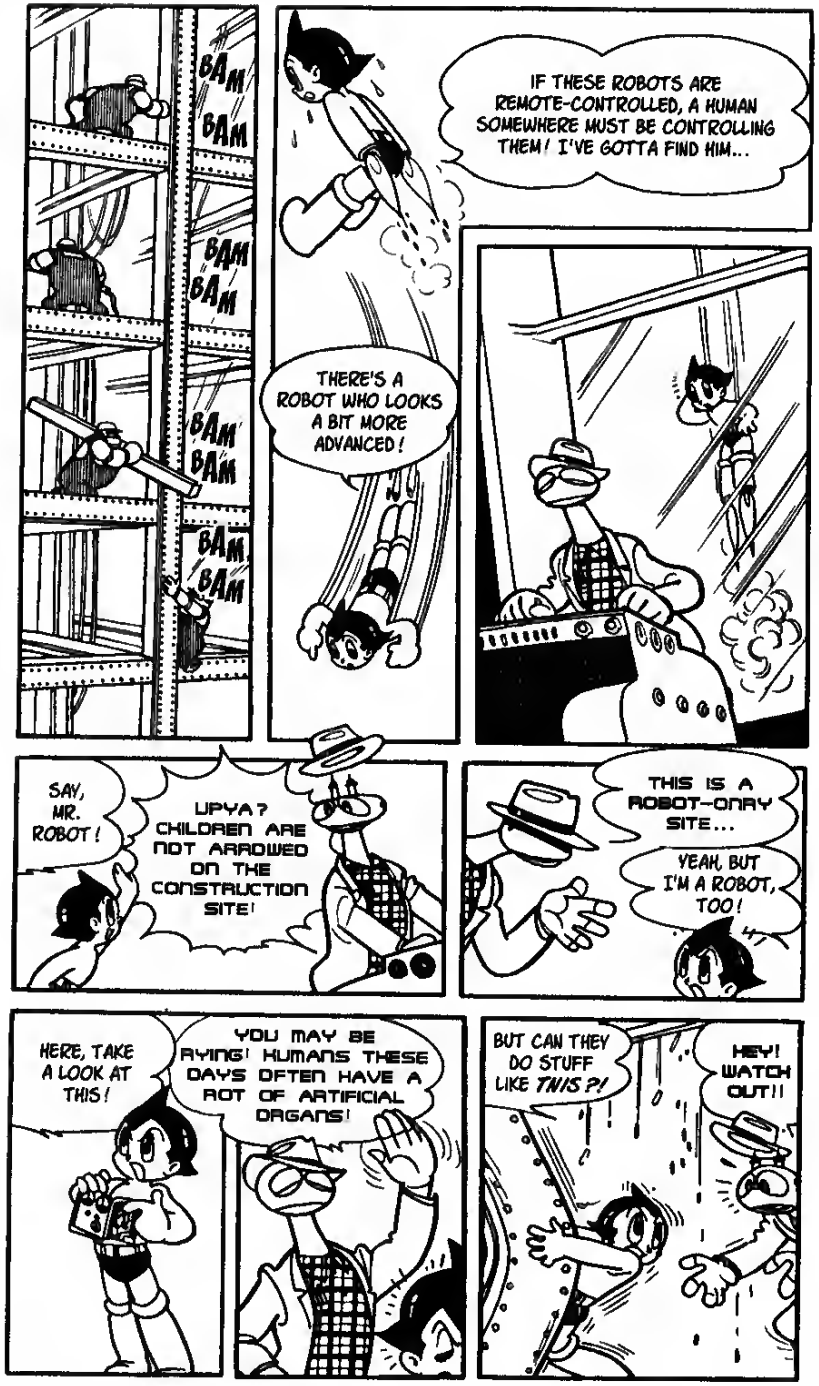

I WAS A BEGGAR IN THE OLD DAYS!!
A *BEGGAR*, SURUME!
YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT THEM 'CUZ IT'S 1993 AND THERE AREN'T ANY!
YOU KIDS GET EVERYTHING YOU WANT THESE DAYS!
EVERY-THING?

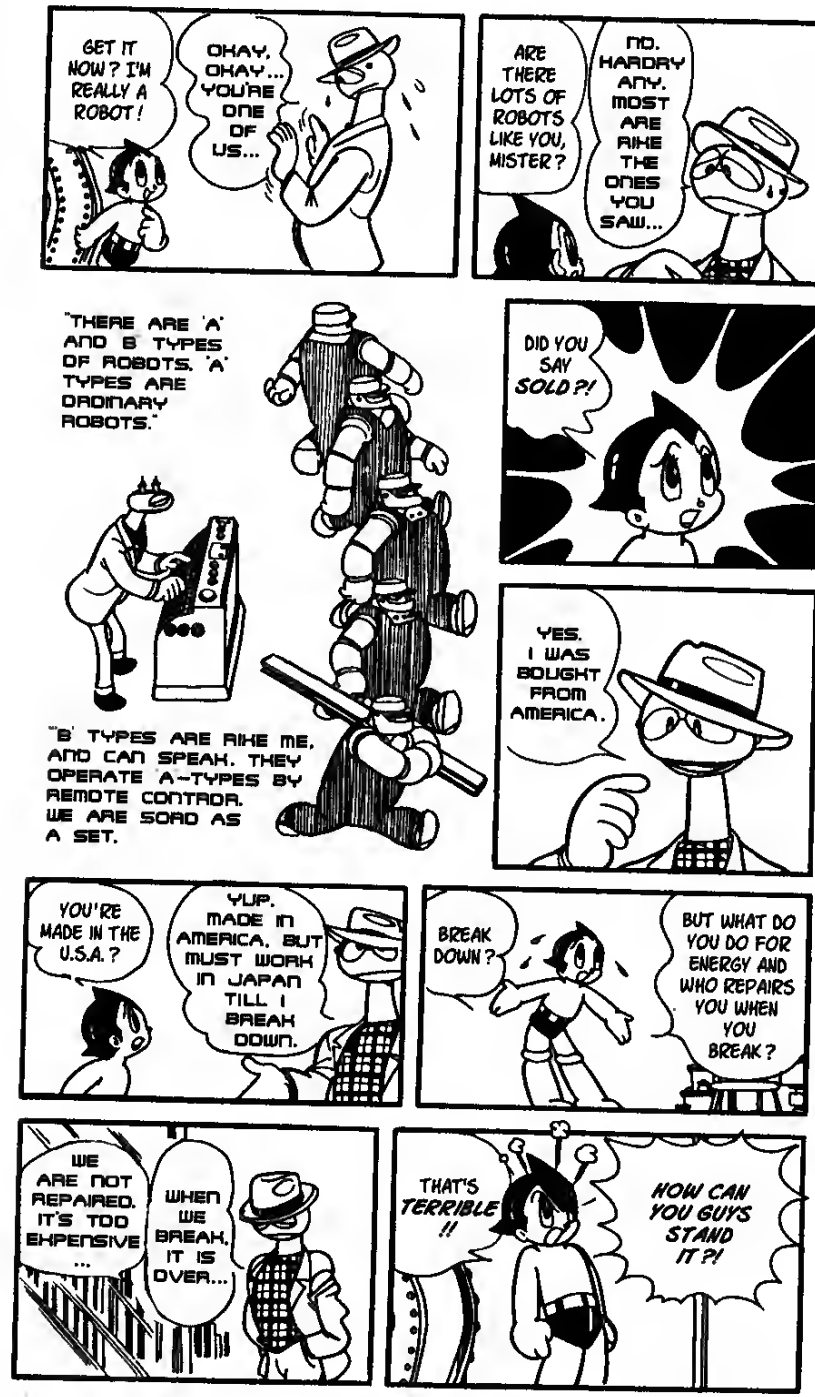





OH MY GOSH! IT'S ALIVE!!
I'M A ROBOT! ARE THERE OTHERS AROUND, TOO?
ASTRO! I TOLD YOU TO STAY STILL!!
ARE THERE REALLY OTHER ROBOTS?
I'VE BEEN TRYING TO KEEP YOU A SECRET, ASTRO!
WHERE ARE THE OTHER ROBOTS?
GOSH, YOU CAN TALK, TOO!
"YOU'RE JUST LIKE A HUMAN! WHAT A SURPRISE! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! LET ME TOUCH YOU.... MY GOODNESS!"
"MY NAME'S ASTRO. I WAS A FRIEND OF YOUR DAD'S A LONG, LONG TIME AGO."
"IT'S JUST LIKE YOU'RE ALIVE! YOU SURE YOU'RE A ROBOT?"
WHERE ARE THE OTHER ROBOTS?
COME ALONG... I'LL SHOW YOU...


BAM BAM BAM CLUNK CLUNK BAM BAM
THEY'RE ALL ROBOTS? REALLY?!
ACK! ASTRO! YOU SMASHED MY WINDOW!
WHOOPS! GOT A LITTLE CARRIED AWAY... SORRY!
HI! ARE YOU GUYS ROBOTS?
HELLO! HELLO! ANY ONE HOME?
CAN'T YOU HEAR ANYTHING?
AW, SHUCKS! THESE ARE REMOTE-CONTROLLED! THE CRUDEST ROBOTS OF ALL!


BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
IF THESE ROBOTS ARE REMOTE-CONTROLLED, A HUMAN SOMEWHERE MUST BE CONTROLLING THEM! I'VE GOTTA FIND HIM...
THERE'S A ROBOT WHO LOOKS A BIT MORE ADVANCED!
SAY, MR. ROBOT!
UPYA? CHILDREN ARE NOT ARROWED ON THE CONSTRUCTION SITE!
THIS IS A ROBOT-ONLY SITE...
YEAH, BUT I'M A ROBOT, TOO!
HERE, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!
YOU MAY BE RYING! HUMANS THESE DAYS OFTEN HAVE A ROT OF ARTIFICIAL ORGANS!
BUT CAN THEY DO STUFF LIKE THIS?!
HEY! WATCH OUT!!

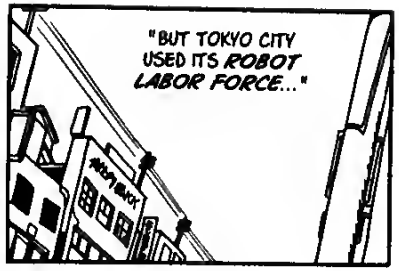

GET IT NOW? I'M REALLY A ROBOT!
OKAY, OKAY... YOU'RE ONE OF US...
ARE THERE LOTS OF ROBOTS LIKE YOU, MISTER?
NO. HARDLY ANY. MOST ARE RIKE THE ONES YOU SAW...
"THERE ARE 'A' AND 'B' TYPES OF ROBOTS. 'A' TYPES ARE ORDINARY ROBOTS."
"B' TYPES ARE RIKE ME, AND CAN SPEAK. THEY OPERATE 'A'-TYPES BY REMOTE CONTROR. WE ARE SORD AS A SET.
DID YOU SAY SOLD?!
YES. I WAS BOUGHT FROM AMERICA.
YOU'RE MADE IN THE U.S.A.?
YUP. MADE IN AMERICA. BUT MUST WORK IN JAPAN TILL I BREAK DOWN.
BREAK DOWN?
BUT WHAT DO YOU DO FOR ENERGY AND WHO REPAIRS YOU WHEN YOU BREAK?
WE ARE NOT REPAIRED. IT'S TOO EXPENSIVE ...
WHEN WE BREAK, IT IS OVER...
THAT'S TERRIBLE !!
HOW CAN YOU GUYS STAND IT?!

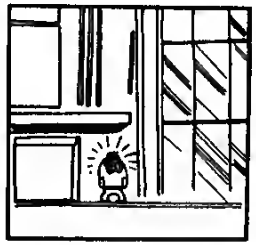
ANYWAY, THANKS FOR YOUR TIME, MR. ROBOT!
WHAT?! YOU CAN FRY IN THE SKY?!
SORRY I BROKE THE WINDOW EARLIER...
IT'S OKAY... YOU'RE SUCH A COOL ROBOT!...
MY NAME'S SURUME. I'VE ALWAYS WANTED A NEW FRIEND TO TALK TO... CAN YOU HANG OUT WITH ME...?
NOT FOR LONG, I'M AFRAID...
I ONLY HAVE A DAY'S WORTH OF ENERGY LEFT IN ME...
I'M SORRY, SURUME, BUT THIS ENERGY TUBE CAN'T KEEP UP WITH HIM...
BUT THAT'S TERRIBLE! WHY CAN'T YOU GIVE HIM ANY MORE?
TODAY'S ENERGY INJECTORS AREN'T ADVANCED ENOUGH FOR A SUPER ROBOT LIKE ASTRO, SURUME...
I'M SORRY, ASTRO. ATOMIC POWER'S AWFULLY EXPENSIVE, AN' THIS IS ALL THE COMPANY COULD AFFORD...
THANKS FOR EVEN TRYING, SHIN-CHAN...

POPULATION CONTROL'S REALLY STRICT THESE DAYS, ASTRO, SO MEN AND WOMEN CAN'T SOCIALIZE THE WAY THEY USED TO...
BUT WITH ROBOTS THERE'S NO PROBLEM!
SO LET'S GO OUT, ASTRO...
UM, DO YOU MIND GOING TO THE MOUNTAINS FIRST...?
TO THE MOUNTAINS? YOU WANT TO GO HIKING?
NO. I NEED TO SEE IF MT. TANIGAWA'S THE SAME.
THE SAME? WELL, IT'S AS TALL AS IT'S EVER BEEN!
I WANT TO CHECK A CERTAIN FIELD THERE FIRST...
DID SOMETHING HAPPEN THERE?
IT'S WHERE I PARTED WITH A FRIEND A LONG TIME AGO...
FLYING FAST IS SCARY!
DON'T WORRY, I DON'T RUN INTO THINGS!
THAT'S MT. TANIGAWA...
I HOPE THE FIELD'S STILL THERE...

I DON'T GET IT. WHAT'S SO INTERESTING ABOUT THIS?
IT'S TIME FOR A LANDING...
LOOKS JUST LIKE IT DID TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO.
GOSH, YOU SOUND LIKE AN OLD MAN, ASTRO...
THIS IS WHERE I PARTED WITH SCARA FOREVER...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING, ASTRO?
SCARA!!
?
.....
...

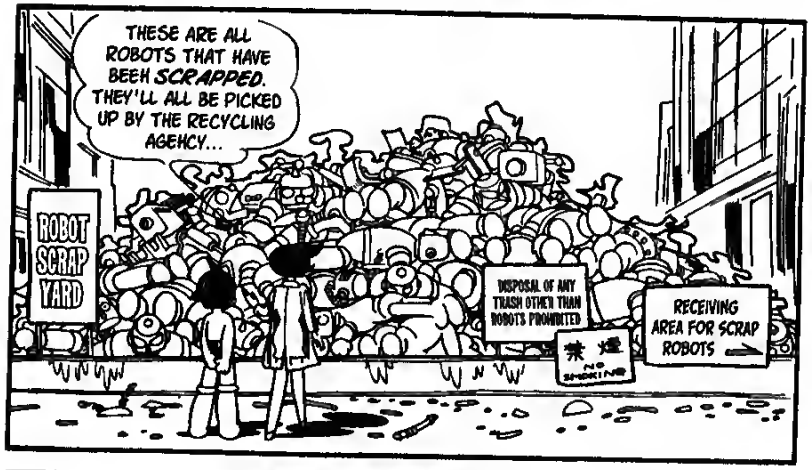
SHE'S PROB'LY DEAD BY NOW...
NOBODY IN PARTICULAR... I JUST STARTED REMEMBERING HER...
WHO'S SCARA?
IS SHE YOUR GIRLFRIEND?
NO... MY OLDER SISTER...
I HAVEN'T SEEN HER FOR TWENTY-FIVE YEARS...
THERE'S ONE MORE PLACE I NEED TO VISIT...
GOSH, I HOPE IT'S NOT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE OCEAN!
NO, IT'S IN SURUGADAI...
SURUGA-DAI?
YEAH. THERE WAS A HOSPITAL THERE NAMED THE "THRILL CLINIC"...
I WORKED THERE TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO, PRETENDING TO BE A HUMAN...
WELL, HERE YOU ARE, ASTRO. THIS IS SURUGADAI...
WOW! IT'S TOTALLY DIFFERENT!

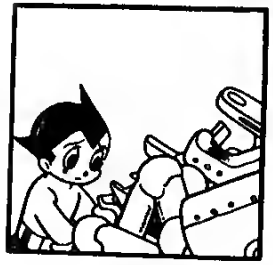


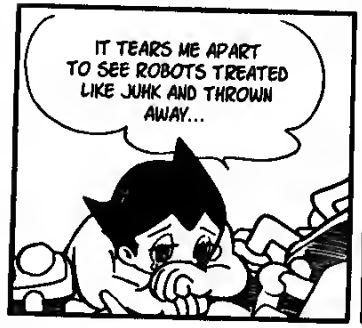


"THE ROBOTS COMPLETELY REMADE THE SURUGADAI AREA. THE ORIGINAL RESIDENTS WERE FORCED TO MOVE INTO SPARKLING NEW, ULTRA-MODERN HOMES, BUT THEY DIDN'T FIND THEM VERY COMFORTABLE...

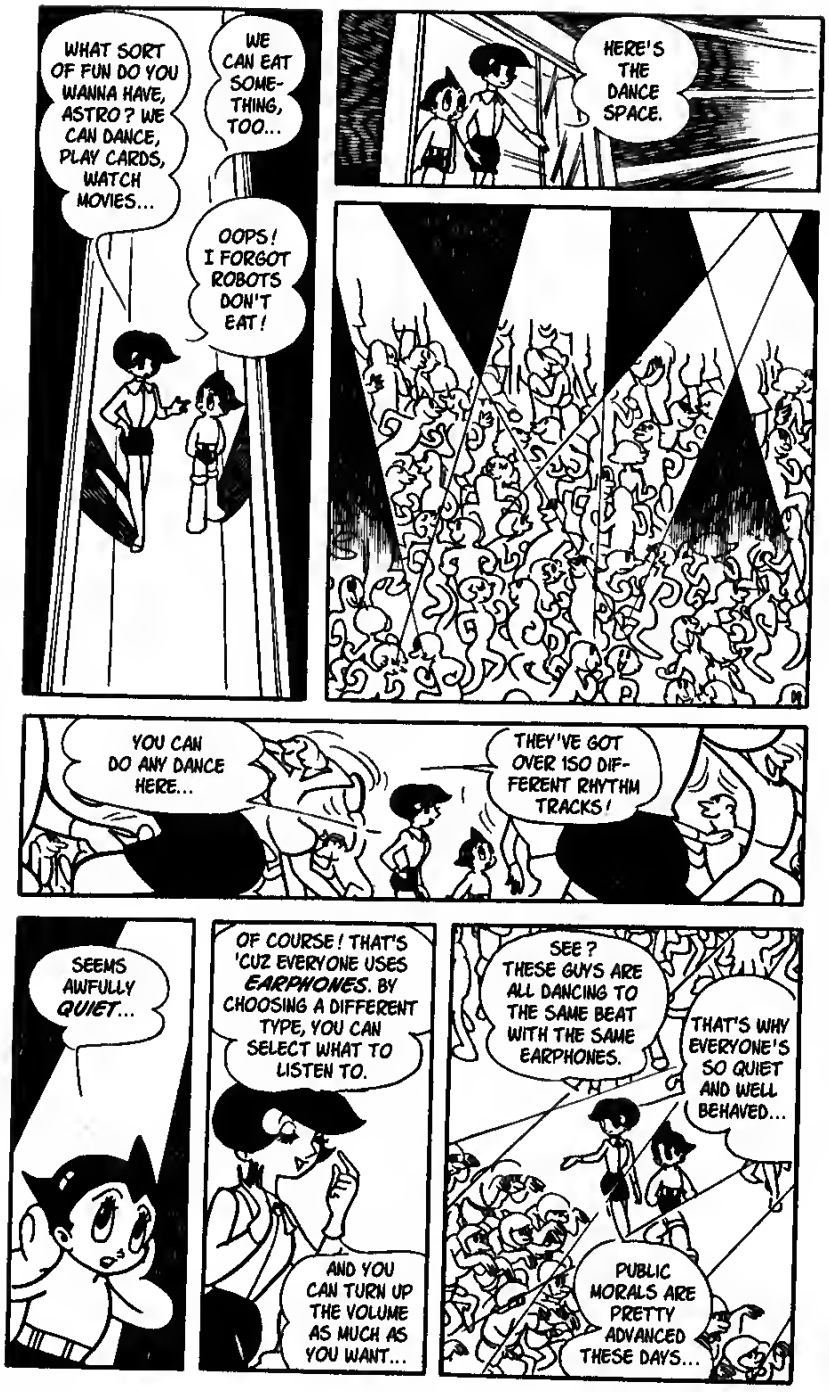
"MANY PEOPLE WHO DIDN'T LIKE THE NEW DISTRICT LEFT. THOSE WHO STAYED HAD TO TRY AND LEAD MORE MODERN, CONVENTIONAL LIVES."


THESE ARE ALL ROBOTS THAT HAVE BEEN SCRAPPED. THEY'LL ALL BE PICKED UP BY THE RECYCLING AGENCY...
ROBOT SCRAP YARD
DISPOSAL OF ANY TRASH OTHER THAN ROBOTS PROHIBITED
NO SMOKING
RECEIVING AREA FOR SCRAP ROBOTS





LET'S GET YOU OUT OF HERE, ASTRO ...
YOU ONLY HAVE TWENTY-FOUR HOURS OF ENERGY...
ROBOT SCRAP YARD
LET ME TAKE YOU SOMEPLACE FUN...
WHAT'S THAT PLACE?
IT'S A FUN ZONE.
"FUN ZONE"? WHAT'S THAT?
IT'S WHERE THEY'VE GOT EVERYTHING FUN ...
BUT WHY CAN'T PEOPLE MAKE THEIR OWN FUN?
WELL... PEOPLE'VE MADE PROGRESS IN RATIONAL LIVING THESE DAYS...
WE'VE FORGOTTEN HOW TO HAVE FUN ON OUR OWN...
...SO WE COME HERE EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE AND HAVE FUN!
TWO MINORS, PLEASE...
UM, YOU LOOK LIKE A ROBOT TO ME...
ROBOTS AREN'T ALLOWED. SORRY, BUT IT'S THE RULES.
HOW DARE YOU! THIS IS MY BOY-FRIEND!
OH... EXCUSE ME, I MISTOOK HIM FOR A ROBOT...

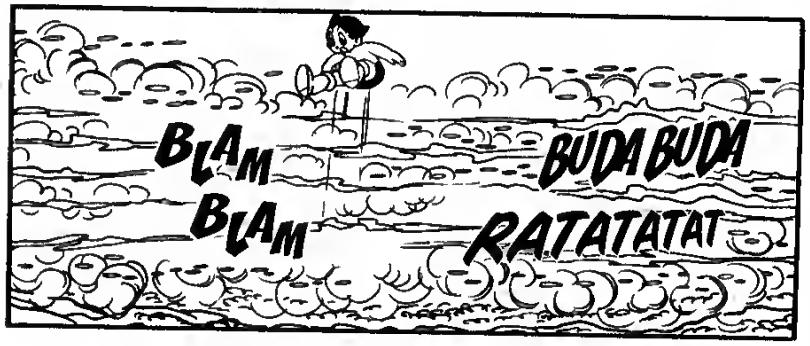

WHAT SORT OF FUN DO YOU WANNA HAVE, ASTRO? WE CAN DANCE, PLAY CARDS, WATCH MOVIES...
WE CAN EAT SOME-THING, TOO...
OOPS! I FORGOT ROBOTS DON'T EAT!
HERE'S THE DANCE SPACE.
YOU CAN DO ANY DANCE HERE...
THEY'VE GOT OVER 150 DIF-FERENT RHYTHM TRACKS!
SEEMS AWFULLY QUIET...
OF COURSE! THAT'S 'CUZ EVERYONE USES EARPHONES. BY CHOOSING A DIFFERENT TYPE, YOU CAN SELECT WHAT TO LISTEN TO.
AND YOU CAN TURN UP THE VOLUME AS MUCH AS YOU WANT...
SEE? THESE GUYS ARE ALL DANCING TO THE SAME BEAT WITH THE SAME EARPHONES.
THAT'S WHY EVERYONE'S SO QUIET AND WELL BEHAVED...
PUBLIC MORALS ARE PRETTY ADVANCED THESE DAYS...

THIS IS THE "FLOOR OF DREAMS."
WHAT'S THAT MEAN?
IT'S WHERE YOU CAN ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE DREAMS...
DREAMS?
ROBOTS DON'T DREAM, RIGHT? WELL, MOST PEOPLE DON'T ANYMORE, EITHER. THEY'VE FORGOTTEN HOW...
THE DREAMS ARE SORTED HERE LIKE RECORD ALBUMS, WITH JACKETS, BY CATEGORY.
YOU JUST PULL OUT THE ONE YOU WANT...
BUT HOW DO YOU USE THEM?
WELL, DREAMS ARE CAUSED BY A KIND OF STIMULATION...
SO YOU'RE GIVEN VARIOUS STIMULI, WHILE SLEEPING, TO CREATE THE DREAMS.
YOU CLIMB IN THESE BOXES, PUT ON THE RECORDS, AND HAVE THE DREAM YOU WANT...
LIKE THIS, SEE?
LOOKS LIKE A COFFIN...

WHY'D WE GO BY THAT ROOM, SURUME?
BECAUSE IT'S DANGEROUS, ASTRO.
WHY?
THAT'S THE MURDER GAME ROOM.
YOU CAN MURDER PEOPLE IN THERE.
IT'S PERFECTLY LEGAL.
YOU'RE KIDDING!!
WHAT'S GOING ON?! MURDER SHOULDN'T BE TREATED LIKE A GAME!!
EVERYBODY INSTINCTIVELY WANTS TO KILL THEIR ENEMIES, RIGHT?
WELL, WE HAVEN'T HAD WARS FOR A LONG TIME...
SO EVERYONE GETS FRUSTRATED...
SO IN THIS ROOM YOU CAN KILL YOUR ENEMIES AND COME OUT FEELING GOOD.
YOU KILL REAL PEOPLE?
SOMEONE REALLY DIES?
OF COURSE. BUT YOU KNOW IN ADVANCE...
...SO YOU HAVE TO ACCEPT IT IF YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S KILLED.
I'M SORRY. I'VE GOTTA SEE THIS!
WATCH OUT, ASTRO!

WOW. THIS IS A WEIRD-LOOKING SPACE...
PEOPLE KILLING EACH OTHER LIKE TO HAVE THE RIGHT MOOD...
SO THERE ARE DIFFERENT SETTINGS PROVIDED TO DUEL IN...
SO THIS IS THE WESTERN SPACE...
AREN'T YOU COMING, SURUME?
HO. I DON'T LIKE SCARY THINGS.
AND A STRAY BULLET MIGHT HIT ME...
I'LL GO ON ALONE, THEN...
GOSH, SURE IS QUIET...
HANDS UP, PARDNER !!
DON'T MOVE! YOU ONE OF THE ENEMY?

YOU'RE NOT? WHO ARE YOU, THEN?
I JUST CAME TO WATCH!
GO HOME, KID. THIS PLACE IS DANGER-OUS!
ENEMIES COULD APPEAR FROM ANY-WHERE...
AREN'T YOU SCARED, MISTER?
SCARED? HECK, YEAH!
SO WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS, THEN?
'CUZ I LOVE THE THRILL OF BEING SCARED!
HMPH. SURE IS WEIRD.
SOME-TIMES I DON'T GET HUMANS
UH OH... GUNFIRE... HE MUST HAVE MET AN ENEMY...
BLAM BLAM BLAM
KAZING
WHAT'S THIS?
THE SCENERY'S SUDDENLY DIFFERENT...
LOOKS LIKE A BATTLE-GROUND...


BLAM
BLAM
BUDA BUDA
RATATATAT

I'M A NAZI SS TROOPER! COOL, HUH?
BUT WHY'RE YOU DRESSED LIKE THAT?

WHY? 'CUZ IF I'M GONNA DIE, I WANNA LOOK COOL!
BUT WHO'RE YOU FIGHTING?

WHO? PEOPLE DRESSED LIKE JAPANESE IMPERIAL NAVY PILOT CADETS!

BUT WHY DO THIS?

HEY, I'M HAVING FUN! IF YOU DON'T GET IT, SCRAM!!

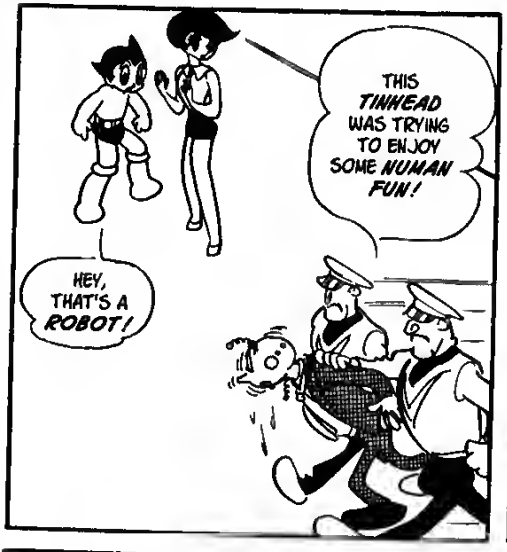
I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS ROOM!

YOU'RE RIGHT, SURUME! IT'S TERRIBLE IN THERE!

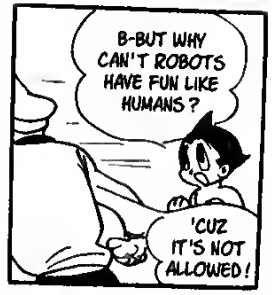
NO! NO!
NO!
STOP!

SOUND'S LIKE A FIGHT...

THEY'RE TAKING SOMEONE OUT...
NO!
NO!


HEY, THAT'S A ROBOT!
THIS TINHEAD WAS TRYING TO ENJOY SOME NUMAN FUN!

BUT WHAT HAPPENED?
HE TRIED TO IMPERSONATE A HUMAN AND MELT INTO THE CROWD, BUT WE GOT HIM...

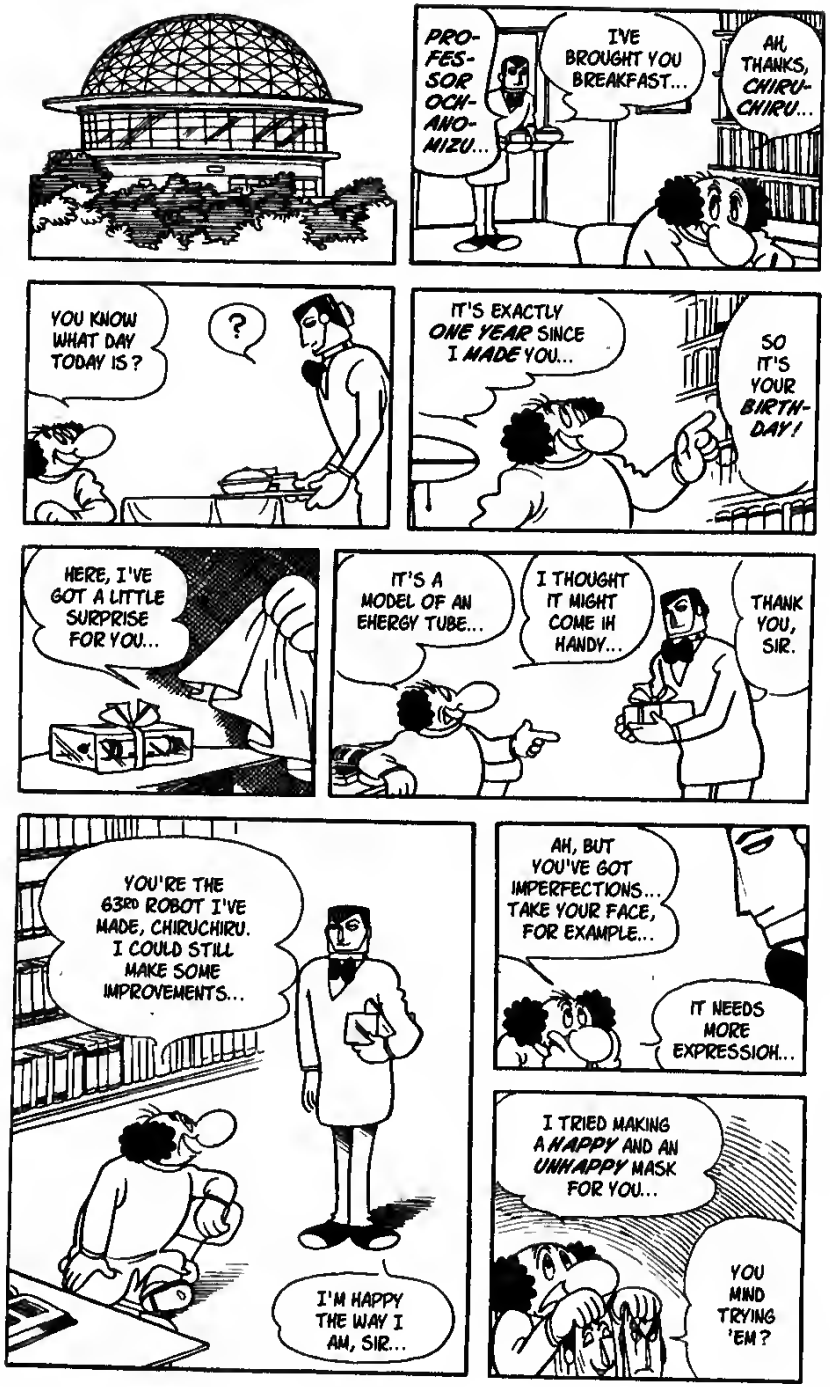

B-BUT WHY CAN'T ROBOTS HAVE FUN LIKE HUMANS?
'CUZ IT'S NOT ALLOWED!

COME TO THINK OF IT...

ARE YOU REALLY A HUMAN?

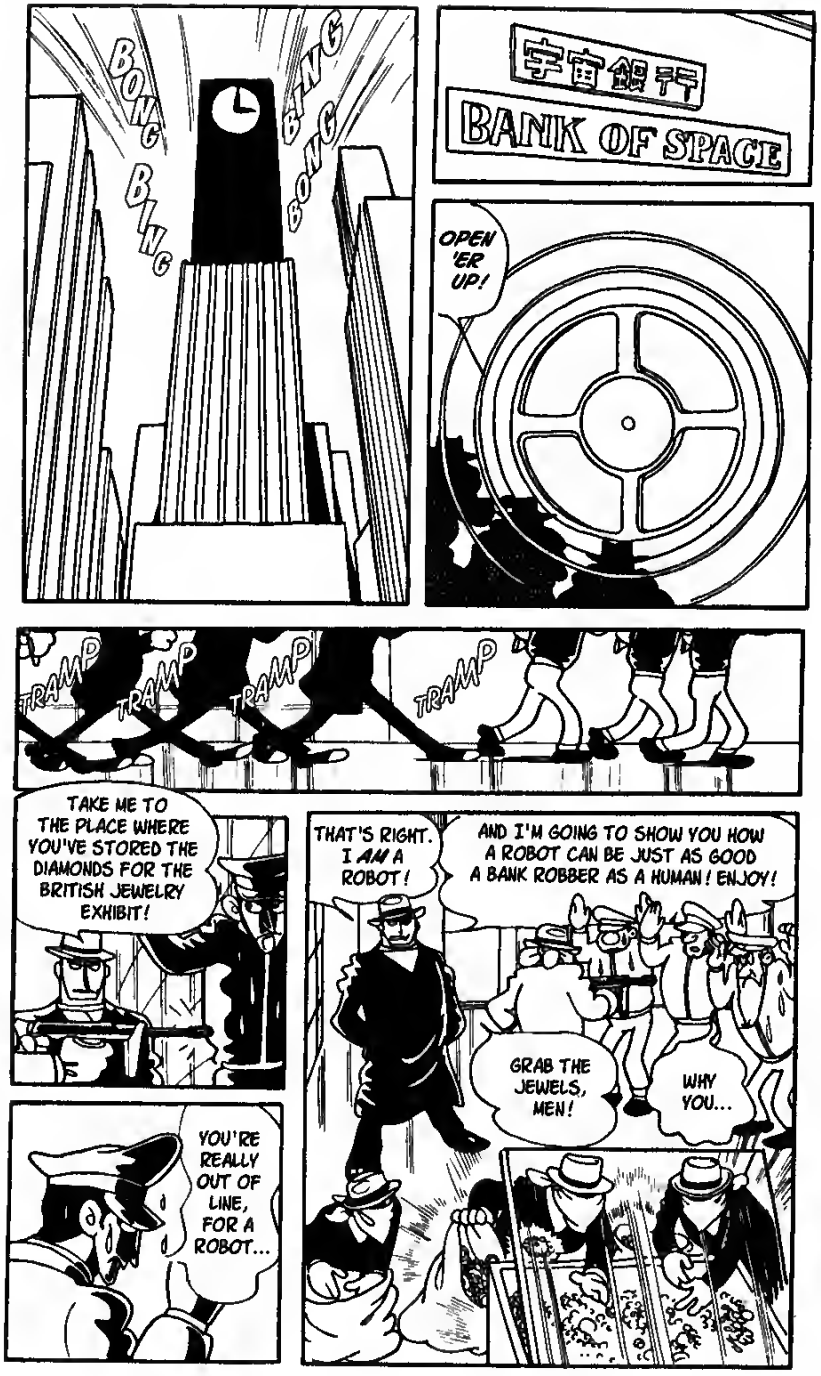
LET'S SEE YOUR HANDS, BOY...
MY HANDS ?
WE'RE CHECKING FOR ROBOTS ...
HOW DARE YOU! HE'S MY BROTHER!
AH, BUT I DIDN'T SEE ANY FINGER-NAILS... AND WHAT'S THAT LINE ON HIS NECK?
DON'T LIE TO ME, YOUNG LADY...
DON'T WORRY, SURUME... IT'S OKAY...
YOU'RE COMING WITH ME, ROBO-BOY!
THIS IS NO PLACE FOR YOU TINHEADS! DON'T EVER COME BACK!
THIS IS TERRIBLE...
HE'S A REAL MESS...
PEOPLE LOOK BAD SOMETIMES, BUT SO DO ROBOTS...

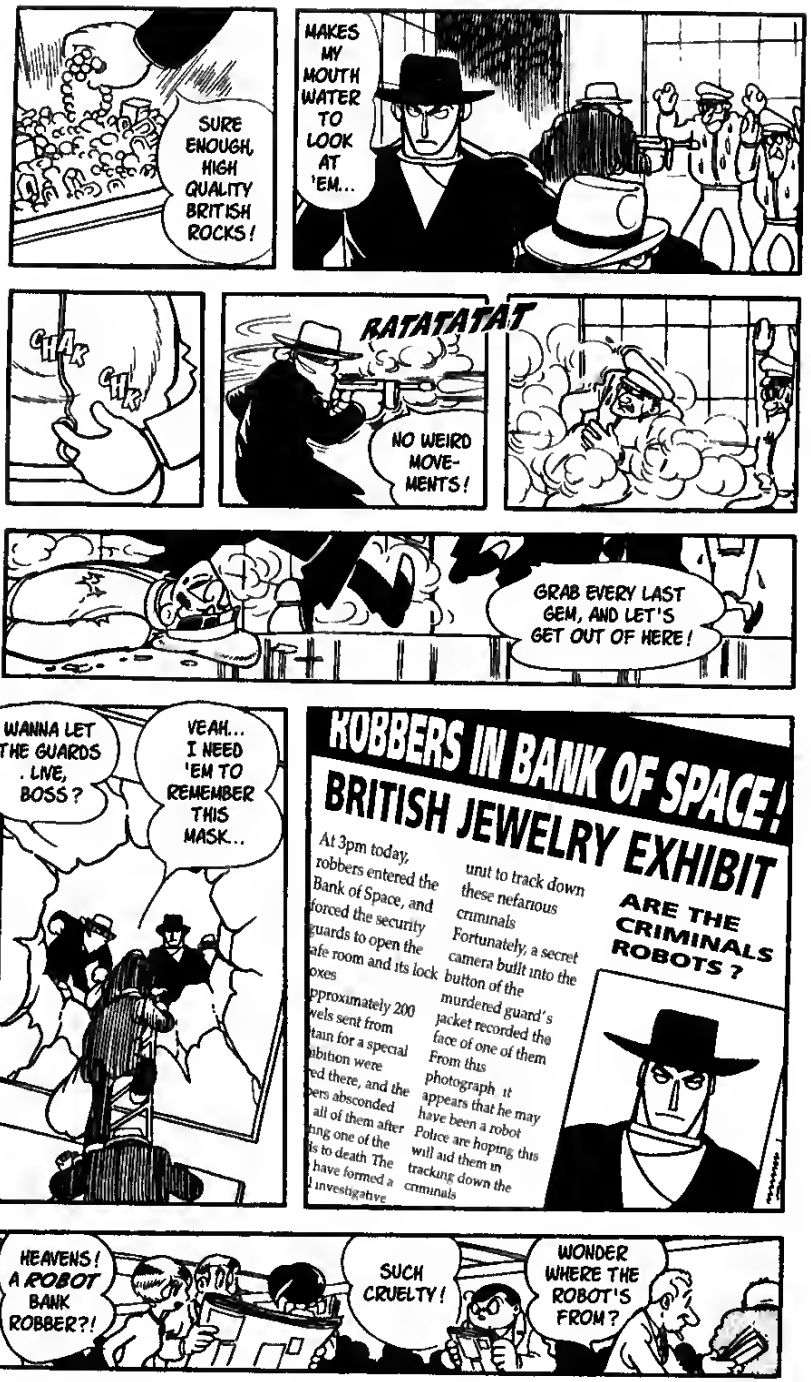
ROBOT CHIRUCHIRU


PRO-FES-SOR OCH-ANO-MIZU...
I'VE BROUGHT YOU BREAKFAST...
AH, THANKS, CHIRU-CHIRU...
YOU KNOW WHAT DAY TODAY IS?
?
IT'S EXACTLY ONE YEAR SINCE I MADE YOU...
SO IT'S YOUR BIRTH-DAY!
HERE, I'VE GOT A LITTLE SURPRISE FOR YOU...
IT'S A MODEL OF AN EHERGY TUBE...
I THOUGHT IT MIGHT COME IH HANDY...
THANK YOU, SIR.
YOU'RE THE 63RD ROBOT I'VE MADE, CHIRUCHIRU. I COULD STILL MAKE SOME IMPROVEMENTS...
I'M HAPPY THE WAY I AM, SIR...
AH, BUT YOU'VE GOT IMPERFECTIONS... TAKE YOUR FACE, FOR EXAMPLE...
IT NEEDS MORE EXPRESSIOH...
I TRIED MAKING A HAPPY AND AN UNHAPPY MASK FOR YOU...
YOU MIND TRYING 'EM?

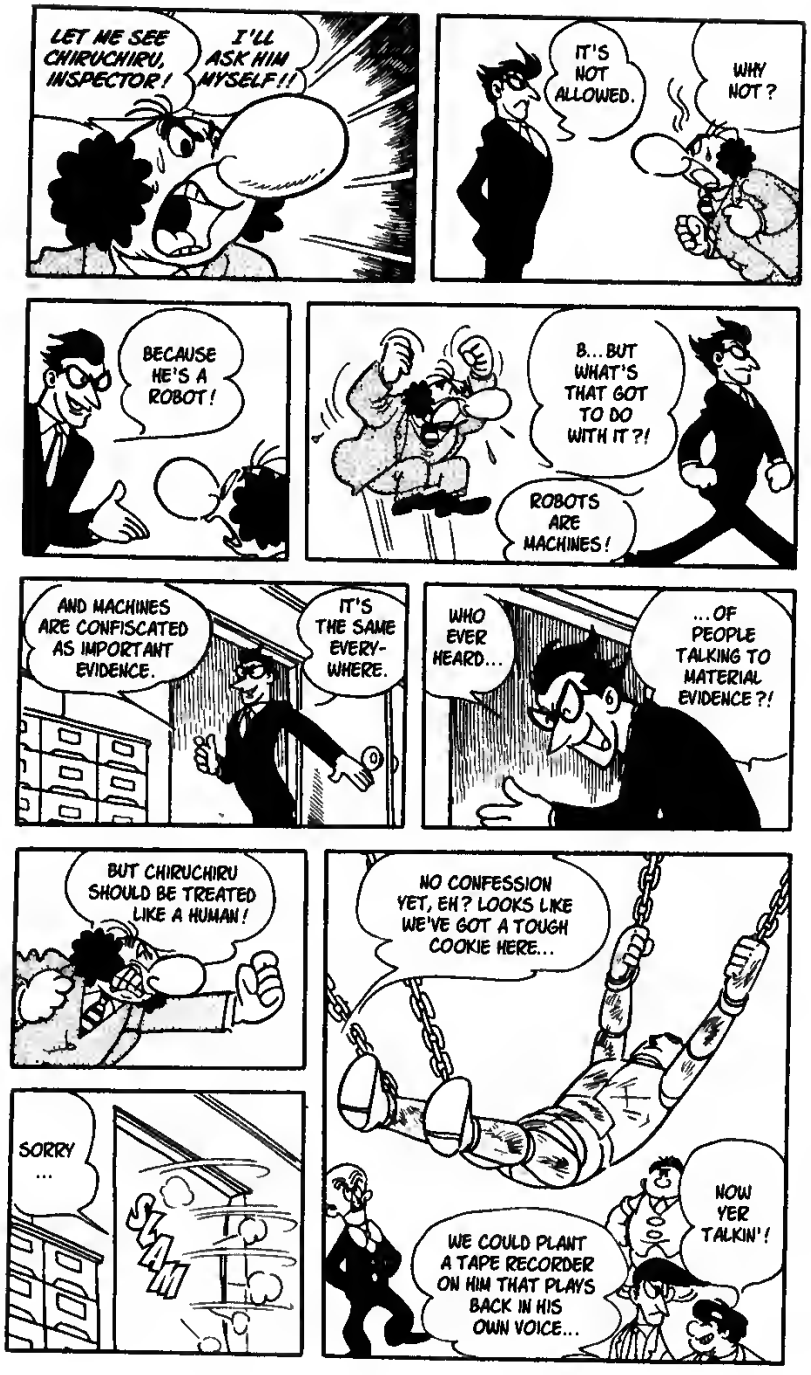
HERE'S HOW IT WORKS. YOU WEAR THAT ONE WHEH YOU'RE HAPPY...
NO! HO! WEAR IT RIGHT, OR YOU'LL LOOK LIKE A LANTERN...
AND THIS ONE YOU SHOULDN'T USE SO OFTEN...
HOKAY!
I'M OFF TO RUH SOME ERRANDS!
I'D LIKE THE ITEMS LISTED OH THIS NOTE...
WELL, DON'T YOU LOOK HAPPY TODAY, CHIRUCHIRU...
JUST FOR THAT I'LL GNE YOU A DISCOUNT!
I FORGOT, I'VE GOT MY HAPPY MASK OH TODAY...
HA HA! DOH'T STRETCH IT LIKE THAT...
SEE HOW IT CHANGES ME?
?
FWISH!
THAT'S ODD, I CAN'T FIHD THE OTHER MASK...
ALL OF A SUDDEH, IT'S MISSING!!
HEH HEH HEH...

THIS WON'T DO...
GOT A PROBLEM, PROFES-SOR...
...SURE DOESN'T LOOK LIKE IT...
WHEN YOU'VE GOT A PROBLEM, YOU SHOULD WEAR THE OTHER MASK...
I KNOW, BUT I LOST IT...
YOU WHAT?!
I PICKED UP SOME-THING COOL, BOSS!
AND WHAT MIGHT THAT BE?
IT'S A MASK... A ROBOT MASK...
HMM... THIS IS INTERESTING...
YOU'VE USED A LOT OF DISGUISES, BOSS...
...BUT I BET YOU'VE NEVER POSED AS A ROBOT!
I GET IT! YOU WANT ME TO WEAR THIS TO WORK!
HAH HAH HAH HAH!

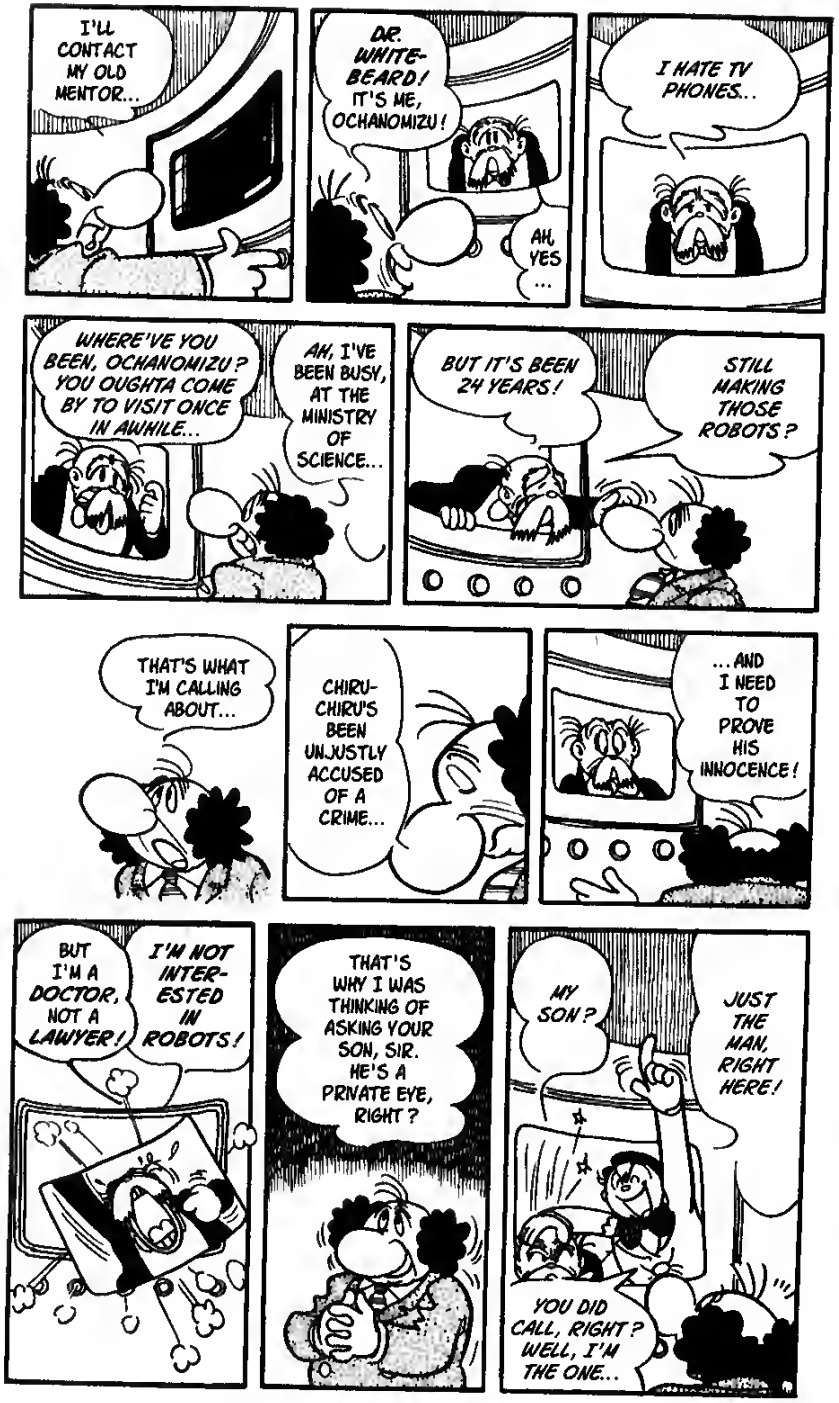

BONG BING BONG BING
宇宙銀行
BANK OF SPACE
OPEN 'ER UP!
TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP TRAMP
TAKE ME TO THE PLACE WHERE YOU'VE STORED THE DIAMONDS FOR THE BRITISH JEWELRY EXHIBIT!
THAT'S RIGHT. I AM A ROBOT!
AND I'M GOING TO SHOW YOU HOW A ROBOT CAN BE JUST AS GOOD A BANK ROBBER AS A HUMAN! ENJOY!
GRAB THE JEWELS, MEN!
WHY YOU...
YOU'RE REALLY OUT OF LINE, FOR A ROBOT...

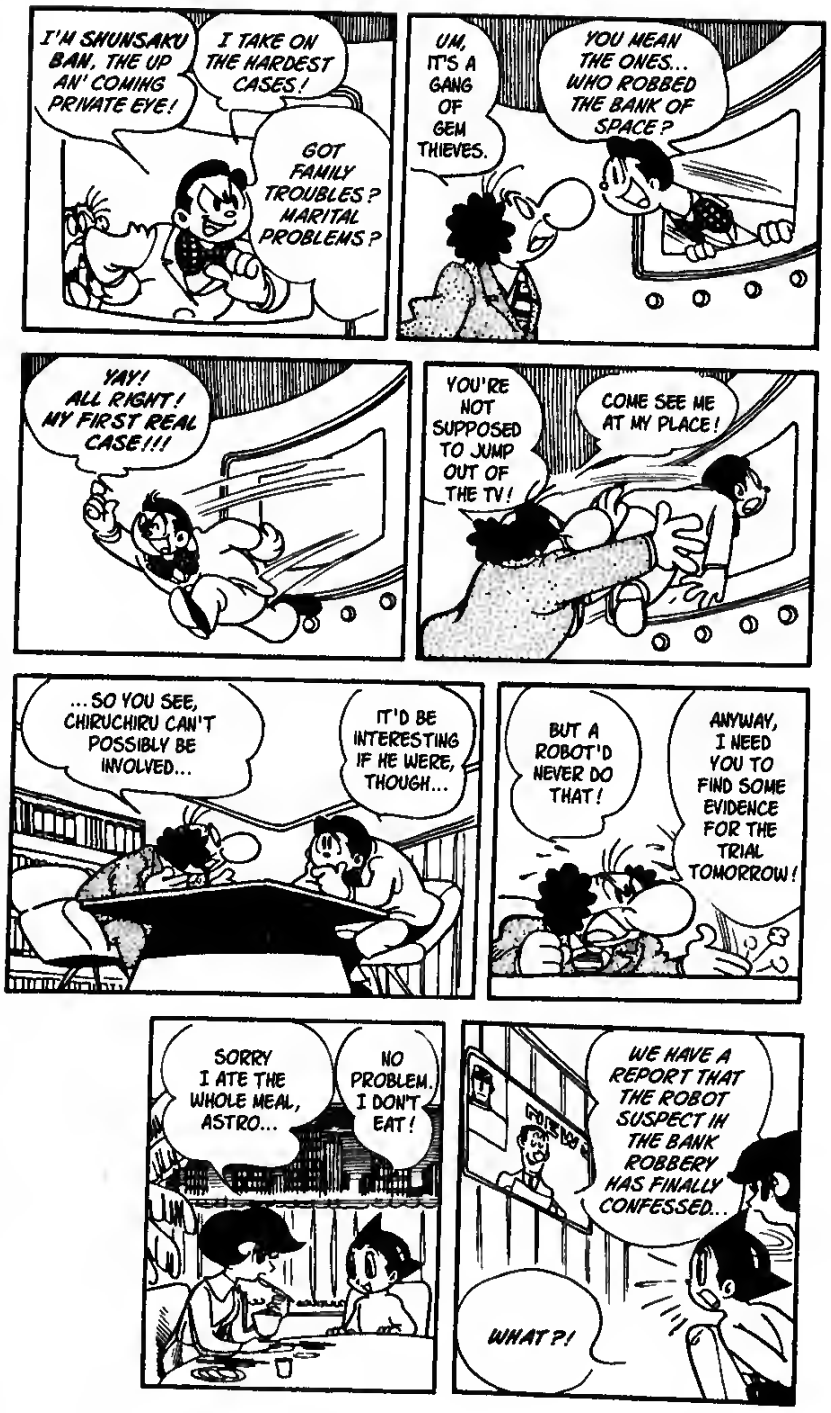

SURE ENOUGH, HIGH QUALITY BRITISH ROCKS!
MAKES MY MOUTH WATER TO LOOK AT 'EM...
CLIK CLIK
RATATATAT
NO WEIRD MOVE-MENTS!
GRAB EVERY LAST GEM, AND LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!
WANNA LET THE GUARDS LIVE, BOSS?
YEAH... I NEED 'EM TO REMEMBER THIS MASK...
ROBBERS IN BANK OF SPACE!
BRITISH JEWELRY EXHIBIT
ARE THE CRIMINALS ROBOTS?
At 3pm today, robbers entered the Bank of Space, and forced the security guards to open the safe room and its lock boxes
Approximately 200 jewels sent from Britain for a special exhibition were stolen there, and the robbers absconded with all of them after killing one of the guards to death. The police have formed a special investigative unit to track down these nefarious criminals.
Fortunately, a secret camera built into the button of the murdered guard's jacket recorded the face of one of them. From this photograph it appears that he may have been a robot. Police are hoping this will aid them in tracking down the criminals.
HEAVENS! A ROBOT BANK ROBBER?!
SUCH CRUELTY!
WONDER WHERE THE ROBOT'S FROM?

IT HAS BEEN LEARNED THAT ONE OF THE JEWELRY THIEVES WHO ROBBED THE BANK OF SPACE AT THREE PM TODAY IS A ROBOT. THIS WAS ESTABLISHED FROM A PHOTOGRAPH OF HIS FACE TAKEN BY ONE OF THE BANK GUARD'S BUTTON-CAMERAS, AND THE TESTIMONY OF THE SURVIVING WITNESSES.
WHEEEEEE
WHEEEE
ARE YOU CHIRU-CHIRU?
I HAVE A WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST, YOU RASCAL!
WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME?
YOU'VE GOT NERVE TO EVEN ASK! TO JAIL, WHERE ELSE?!
CHIRUCHIRU DID WHAT?!
I'M SORRY, PROFESSOR, BUT WE NEED YOU TO COME ALONG AS A KEY WITNESS...
CHIRUCHIRU? INVOLVED WITH JEWELRY THIEVES? I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
OKAY, CHIRUCHIRU, FESS UP!
I... I HAVE NOT DONE WHAT YOU SAY, SIR...
WANT ME TO RIP OFF ONE OF HIS FINGERS?


LET ME SEE CHIRUCHIRU, INSPECTOR!
I'LL ASK HIM MYSELF!!
IT'S NOT ALLOWED.
WHY NOT?
BECAUSE HE'S A ROBOT!
B...BUT WHAT'S THAT GOT TO DO WITH IT?!
ROBOTS ARE MACHINES!
AND MACHINES ARE CONFISCATED AS IMPORTANT EVIDENCE.
IT'S THE SAME EVERY-WHERE.
WHO EVER HEARD...
...OF PEOPLE TALKING TO MATERIAL EVIDENCE?!
BUT CHIRUCHIRU SHOULD BE TREATED LIKE A HUMAN!
NO CONFESSION YET, EH? LOOKS LIKE WE'VE GOT A TOUGH COOKIE HERE...
SORRY ...
SLAM
NOW YER TALKIN'!
WE COULD PLANT A TAPE RECORDER ON HIM THAT PLAYS BACK IN HIS OWN VOICE...

WE'LL OPEN HIM UP BACK HERE...
...'N START THE TAPE RECORDER LIKE SO...
...AND THE TAPE'LL SAY, "I DID IT."
LET'S SEE WHAT HAPPENS...
TELL US YOU DID IT, CHIRU-CHIRU!
I DID IT I DID IT I DID IT
YAY! FINALLY!
BUT I DIDN'T DO IT!
I DID IT
I AM NOT A CRIMINAL!
I DID IT
HELLO? CHIEF? WE FINALLY GOT A CONFESSION OUT OF HIM!
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT LOSING FACE NOW...
NO BUDGET, SO USING 50 YEAR OLD PHONE
HE CONFESSED?! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
BUT THEY SAY HE DID...
I'LL FIGHT THIS IN COURT! THIS IS A CON-SPIRACY!
I KNOW! I NEED A PRIVATE EYE!
I'LL TRACK DOWN THE REAL CRIMINAL!


I'LL CONTACT MY OLD MENTOR...
DR. WHITE-BEARD! IT'S ME, OCHANOMIZU!
AH, YES ...
I HATE TV PHONES...
WHERE'VE YOU BEEN, OCHANOMIZU? YOU OUGHTA COME BY TO VISIT ONCE IN AWHILE...
AH, I'VE BEEN BUSY, AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE...
BUT IT'S BEEN 24 YEARS!
STILL MAKING THOSE ROBOTS?
THAT'S WHAT I'M CALLING ABOUT...
CHIRU-CHIRU'S BEEN UNJUSTLY ACCUSED OF A CRIME...
...AND I NEED TO PROVE HIS INNOCENCE!
BUT I'M A DOCTOR, NOT A LAWYER!
I'M NOT INTER-ESTED IN ROBOTS!
THAT'S WHY I WAS THINKING OF ASKING YOUR SON, SIR. HE'S A PRIVATE EYE, RIGHT?
MY SON?
JUST THE MAN, RIGHT HERE!
YOU DID CALL, RIGHT? WELL, I'M THE ONE...

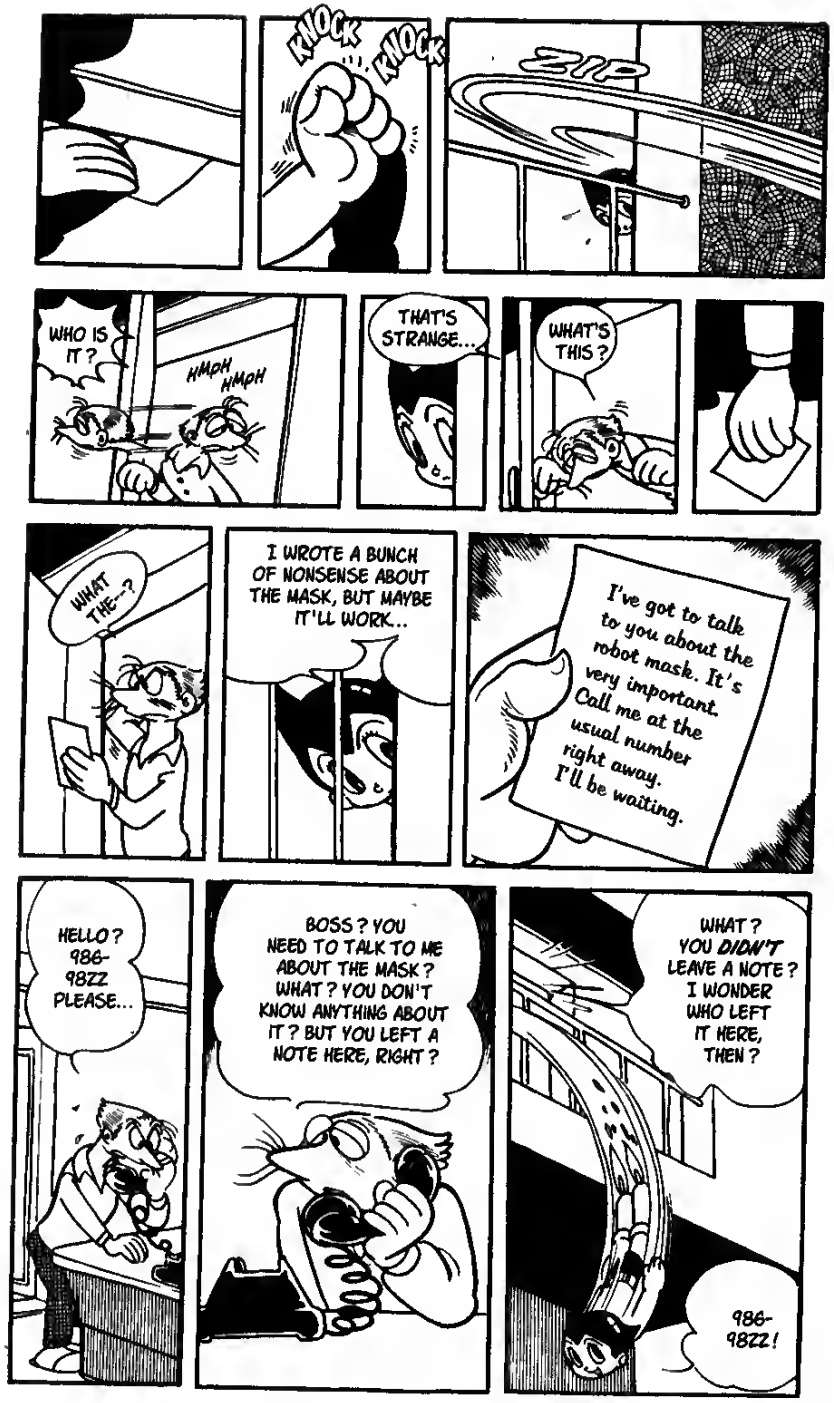

I'M SHUNSAKU BAN, THE UP AN' COMING PRIVATE EYE!
I TAKE ON THE HARDEST CASES!
GOT FAMILY TROUBLES? MARITAL PROBLEMS?
UM, IT'S A GANG OF GEM THIEVES.
YOU MEAN THE ONES... WHO ROBBED THE BANK OF SPACE?
YAY! ALL RIGHT! MY FIRST REAL CASE!!!
YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO JUMP OUT OF THE TV!
COME SEE ME AT MY PLACE!
...SO YOU SEE, CHIRUCHIRU CAN'T POSSIBLY BE INVOLVED...
IT'D BE INTERESTING IF HE WERE, THOUGH...
BUT A ROBOT'D NEVER DO THAT!
ANYWAY, I NEED YOU TO FIND SOME EVIDENCE FOR THE TRIAL TOMORROW!
SORRY I ATE THE WHOLE MEAL, ASTRO...
NO PROBLEM. I DON'T EAT!
WE HAVE A REPORT THAT THE ROBOT SUSPECT IN THE BANK ROBBERY HAS FINALLY CONFESSED...
WHAT?!

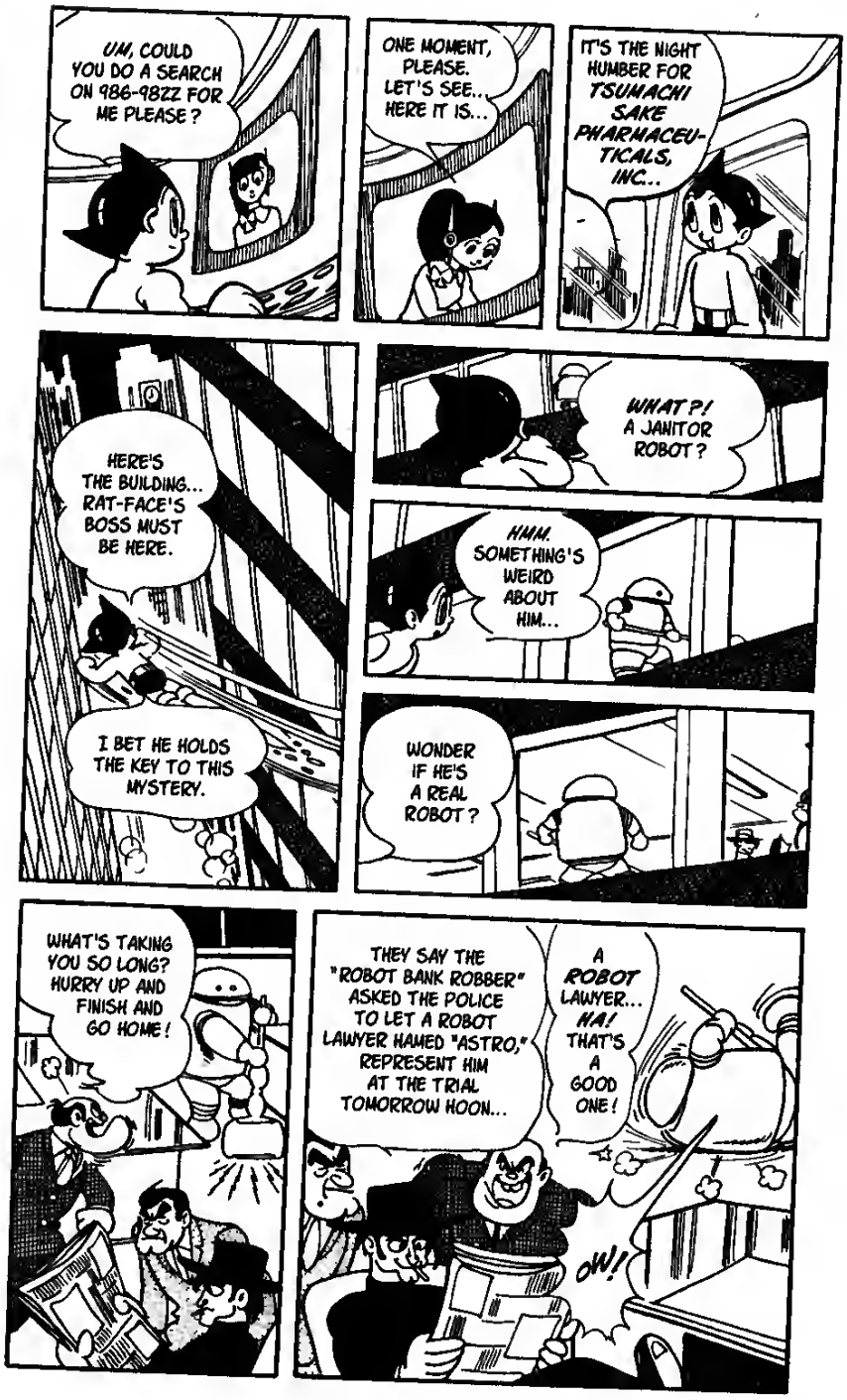
A ROBOT? ROBBING A BANK?!
CONFESSING TO A CRIME?!
BUT... BUT...
...THAT CAN'T BE!!
I'VE GOTTA GO FIND THAT ROBOT!
NO, ASTRO!
YOU CAN'T!
THEY WON'T LET A ROBOT MEET HIM!
WHY NOT?!
BECAUSE ROBOTS DON'T HAVE RIGHTS!
BUT I'VE GOT TO SEE HIM...
I...I DON'T THINK YOU CAN, ASTRO...
B-B-BUT...
...I'VE GOTTA HELP HIM!
LISTEN, ASTRO...
YOU'VE ONLY GOT HALF A DAY LEFT. LET'S DO SOMETHING FUN THIS EVENING!
I DON'T CARE IF I USE UP ALL MY TIME.
I'M GONNA SAVE THAT ROBOT.
NO ROBOT'D DO ANYTHING BAD LIKE THAT.
IF HE DID, HE'S GOTTA HAVE A FLAWED DESIGN...
...AND IF SO, HE'D NEVER CONFESS TO A CRIME!

WHAT IS IT, KID?
UM, CAN YOU TELL ME WHERE THAT CHIRUCHIRU ROBOT'S IMPRISONED?
DUNNO WHY YA ASK..
...BUT HE'S IN ISOLATION IN THE BASEMENT OF THE BUILDING ON THE RIGHT...
THANKS, MISTER
?
HERE WE GO!
MUST BE SOME-PLACE AROUND HERE...
WHO'S CALLING ME FROM UNDER THE FLOOR?
MR. CHIRU-CHIRU! MR. CHIRU-CHIRU!
HOW'D YOU GET THERE?
I'M A ROBOT BOY, AND I NEED TO TALK TO YOU!
I WANT TO HELP YOU. TELL ME WHERE YOU WENT TODAY!
I JUST WENT TO THE GROCERY FOR THE PROFES-SOR...

"COME TO THINK OF IT, THERE WAS A LITTLE MAN I'D NEVER SEEN BEFORE IN THE CORNER..."
"HE PASSED ME WHEN I WALKED OUT..."
?
FWIP
"AND THAT'S WHEN I REALIZED THE FACE MASK I HAD IN MY POCKET WAS MISSING."
WAS HE A PICK-POCKET?
WHAT'S A PICK-POCKET?
IT'S A BAD PERSON WHO STEALS OTHER PEOPLE'S THINGS...
BUT, HMM... IF HE STOLE YOUR FACE MASK...
WHAT DID HE LOOK LIKE?
HIS RIGHT SHOULDER WAS HUNCHED UP A BIT, AND HIS FACE, COME TO THINK OF IT, LOOKED LIKE... LIKE A RAT...
OOKAY, CHIRUCHIRU. I'LL GATHER AS MUCH EVIDENCE AS I CAN, BUT YOU'RE GONNA NEED A LAWYER.
A LAWYER? FOR A BOY, YOU KNOW MANY THINGS...
WELL, I LEARNED THEM FROM TV.
MAYBE I COULD REPRESENT YOU...

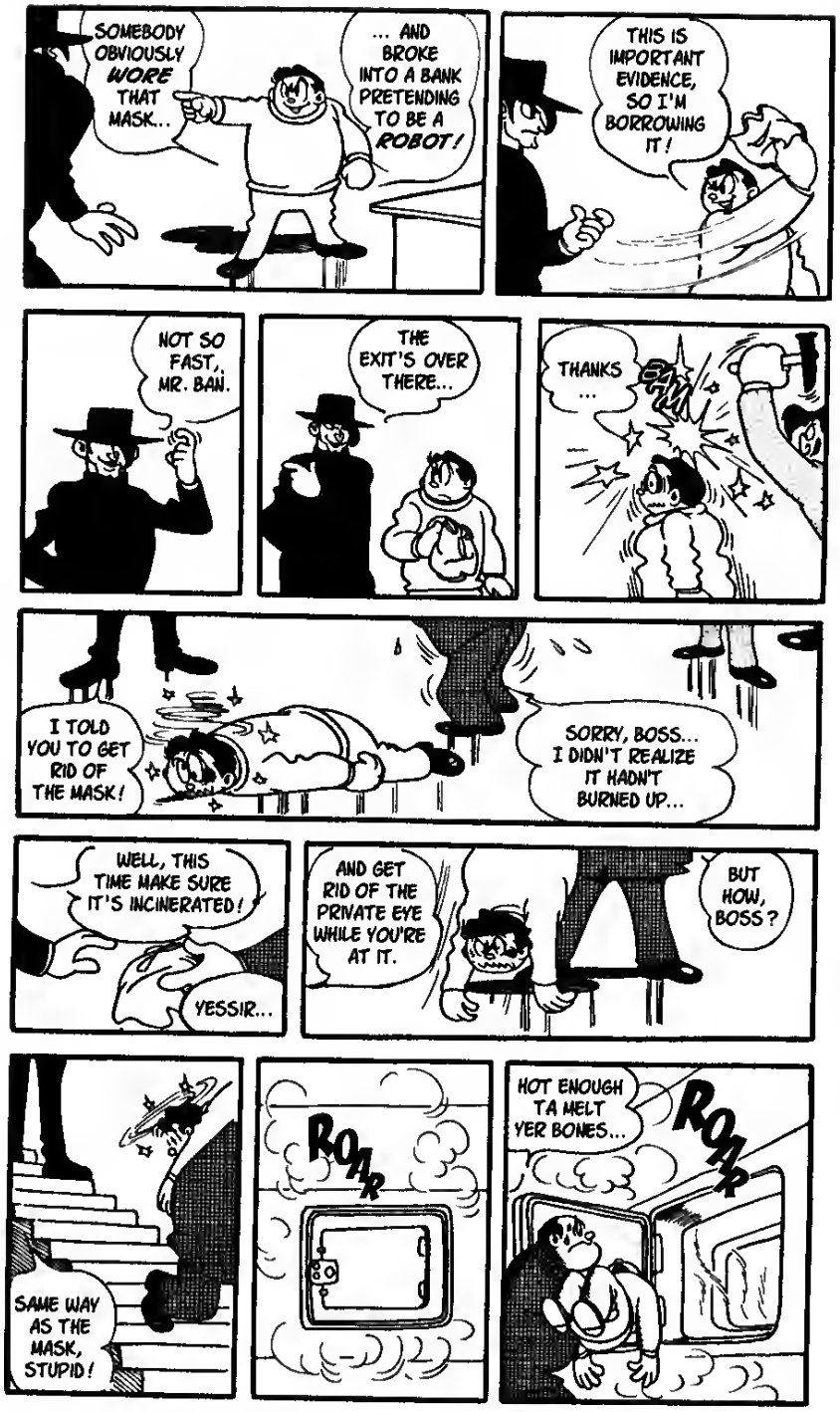
WILL YOU REALLY HELP ME?
TELL ME, WHAT IS YOUR NAME?
I'M ASTRO!
ASTRO ...?
I'VE GOT A LOT TO DO, AND ONLY ONE CLUE...
ONLY A HALF DAY LEFT...
BUT I'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS...
HM. A MAN WITH A RAT-LIKE FACE AND ONE SHOULDER HUNCHED UP...
REALLY? YOU KNOW WHERE HE LIVES?
I THINK I HAVE SEEN HIM HERE. WE'VE DELIVERED SOMETHING TO HIM.
HE'S ON THE 5TH FLOOR OF THIS APARTMENT HERE, IN ROOM NO. 5. THE NAME'S YAMORI.
GOSH, THANKS!
THE 5TH FLOOR, ROOM 5...
SOUNDS LIKE HE'S HOME..
I KNOW...
I'VE GOTTA GET HIM TO TALK SOMEHOW...

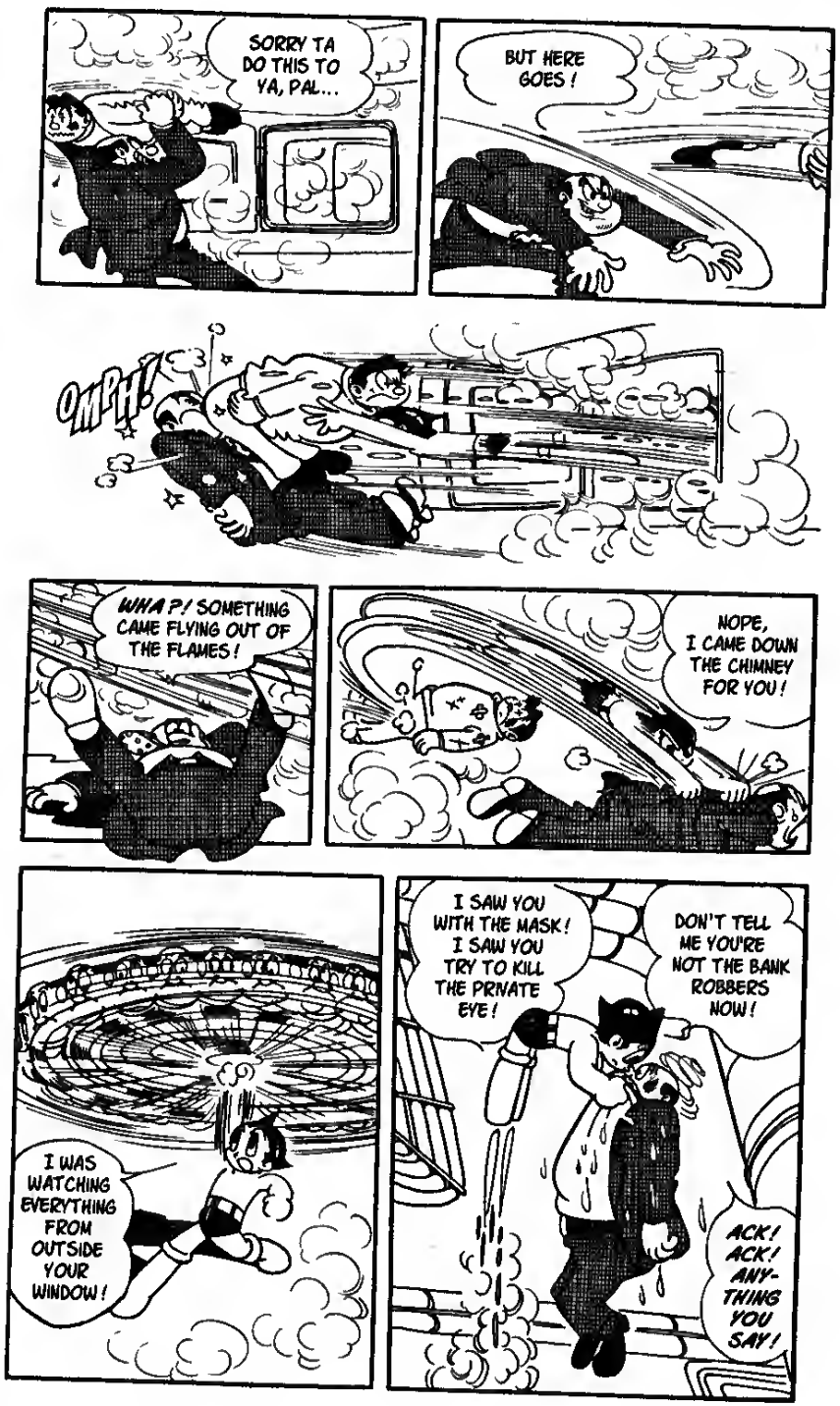

KNOCK KNOCK
ZIP
WHO IS IT?
HMPH HMPH
THAT'S STRANGE...
WHAT'S THIS?
WHAT THE--?
I WROTE A BUNCH OF NONSENSE ABOUT THE MASK, BUT MAYBE IT'LL WORK...
I've got to talk to you about the robot mask. It's very important. Call me at the usual number right away. I'll be waiting.
HELLO? 986-98ZZ PLEASE...
BOSS? YOU NEED TO TALK TO ME ABOUT THE MASK? WHAT? YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT? BUT YOU LEFT A NOTE HERE, RIGHT?
WHAT? YOU DIDN'T LEAVE A NOTE? I WONDER WHO LEFT IT HERE, THEN?
986-98ZZ!

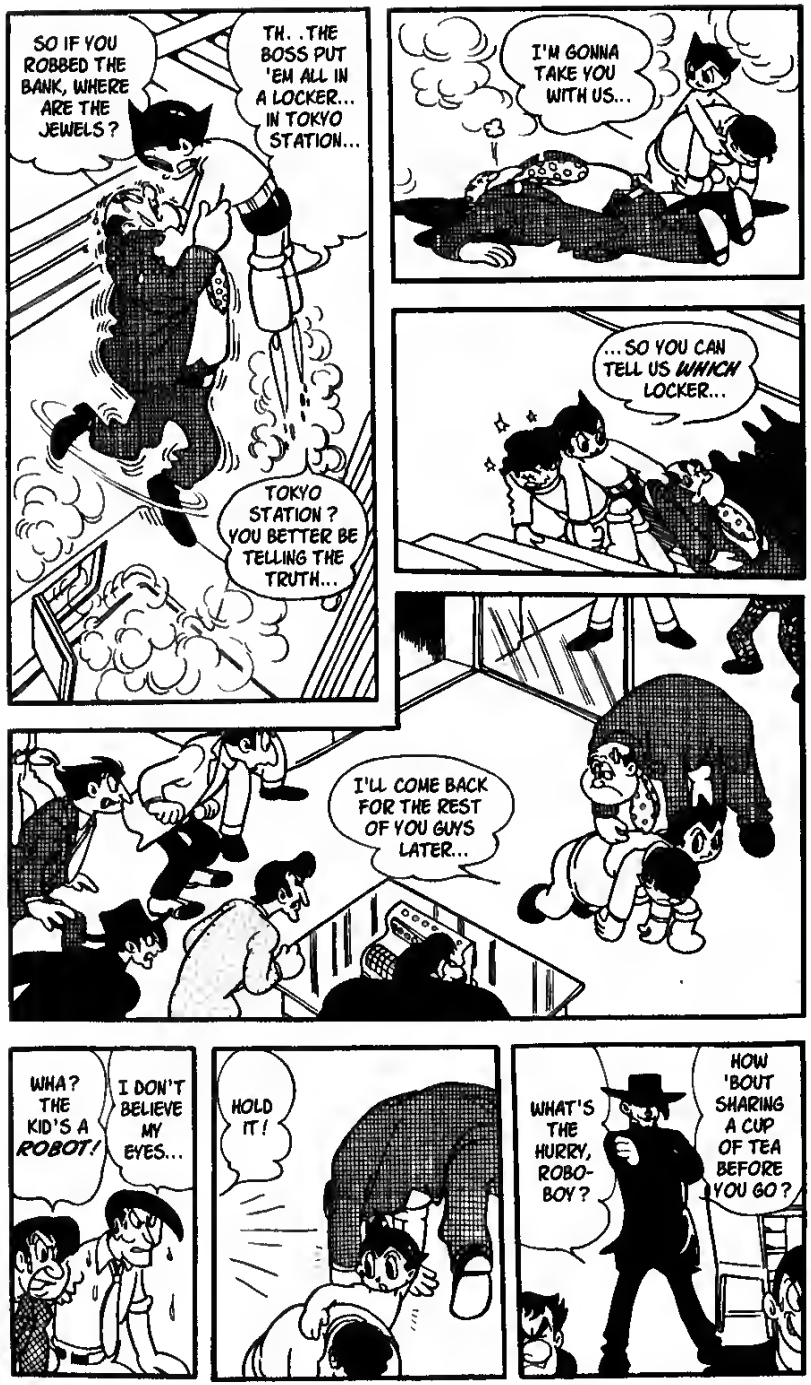

UM, COULD YOU DO A SEARCH ON 986-98ZZ FOR ME PLEASE?
ONE MOMENT, PLEASE. LET'S SEE... HERE IT IS...
IT'S THE NIGHT NUMBER FOR TSUMACHI SAKE PHARMACEUTICALS, INC...
HERE'S THE BUILDING... RAT-FACE'S BOSS MUST BE HERE.
I BET HE HOLDS THE KEY TO THIS MYSTERY.
WHAT?! A JANITOR ROBOT?
HMM. SOMETHING'S WEIRD ABOUT HIM...
WONDER IF HE'S A REAL ROBOT?
WHAT'S TAKING YOU SO LONG? HURRY UP AND FINISH AND GO HOME!
THEY SAY THE "ROBOT BANK ROBBER" ASKED THE POLICE TO LET A ROBOT LAWYER NAMED "ASTRO," REPRESENT HIM AT THE TRIAL TOMORROW HOON...
A ROBOT LAWYER... HA! THAT'S A GOOD ONE!
OW!

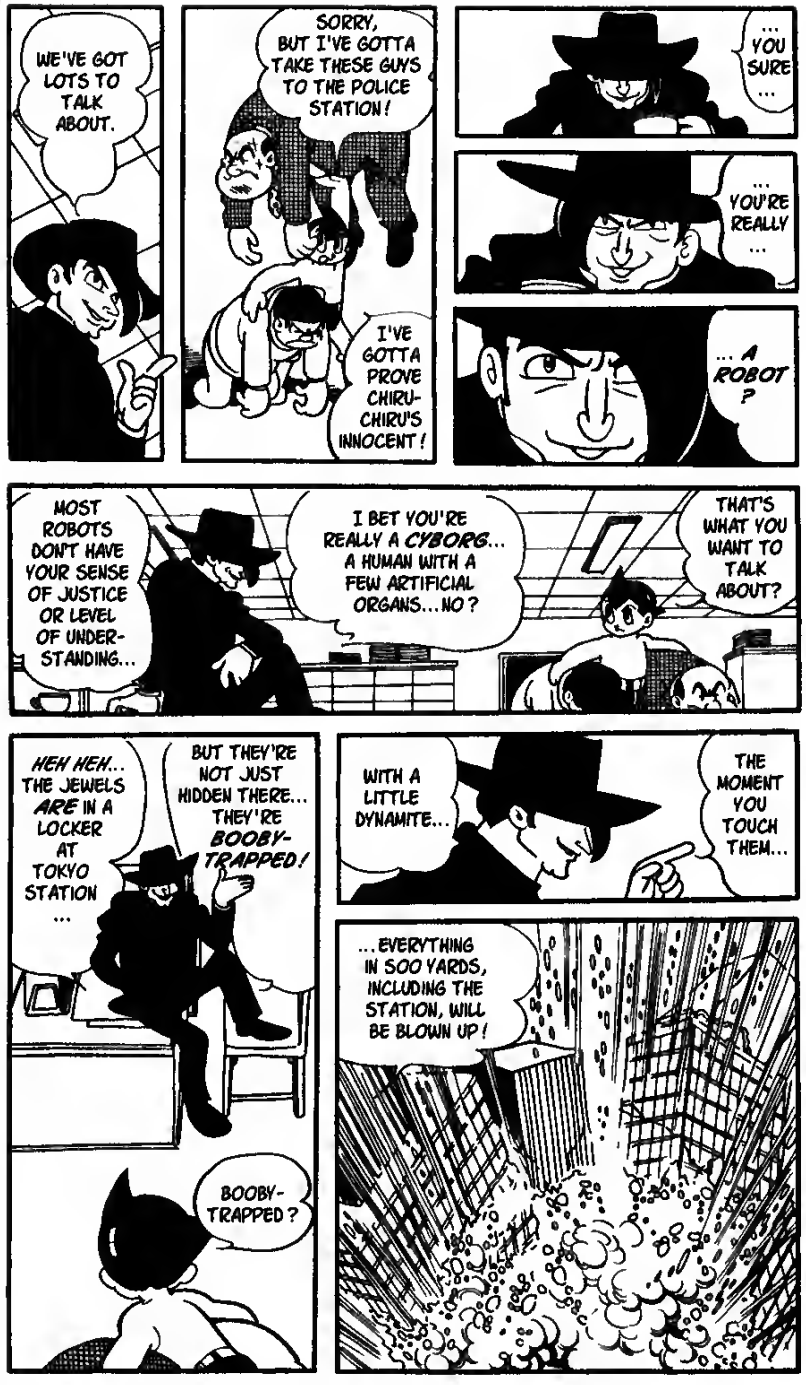
SINCE WHEN DOES A ROBOT TRIP OVER HIMSELF?!
AND DIDN'T YOU JUST SAY "OW"?!
ACK!
WELL, SAY IT AGAIN!
OWW!
THIS IS FUN! FIRST TIME I'VE MET A ROBOT THAT SAYS "OW!"
OW OW OW OW
HEH HEH. LAWYER ROBOTS! ROBOTS THAT SAY OUCH! WHAT'S THE WORLD COMING TO, EH, BOSS?
MAKE HIM HURT SOME MORE. TRY TEARING HIS HEAD OFF!
HIS HEAD, EH? YESSIR!
THIS IS REALLY GONNA HURT YOU!
YIKES!
POP
WELL, WELL... A MAN WEARING A ROBOT SUIT, AND AN ODDLY FAMILIAR FACE...
UH OH...

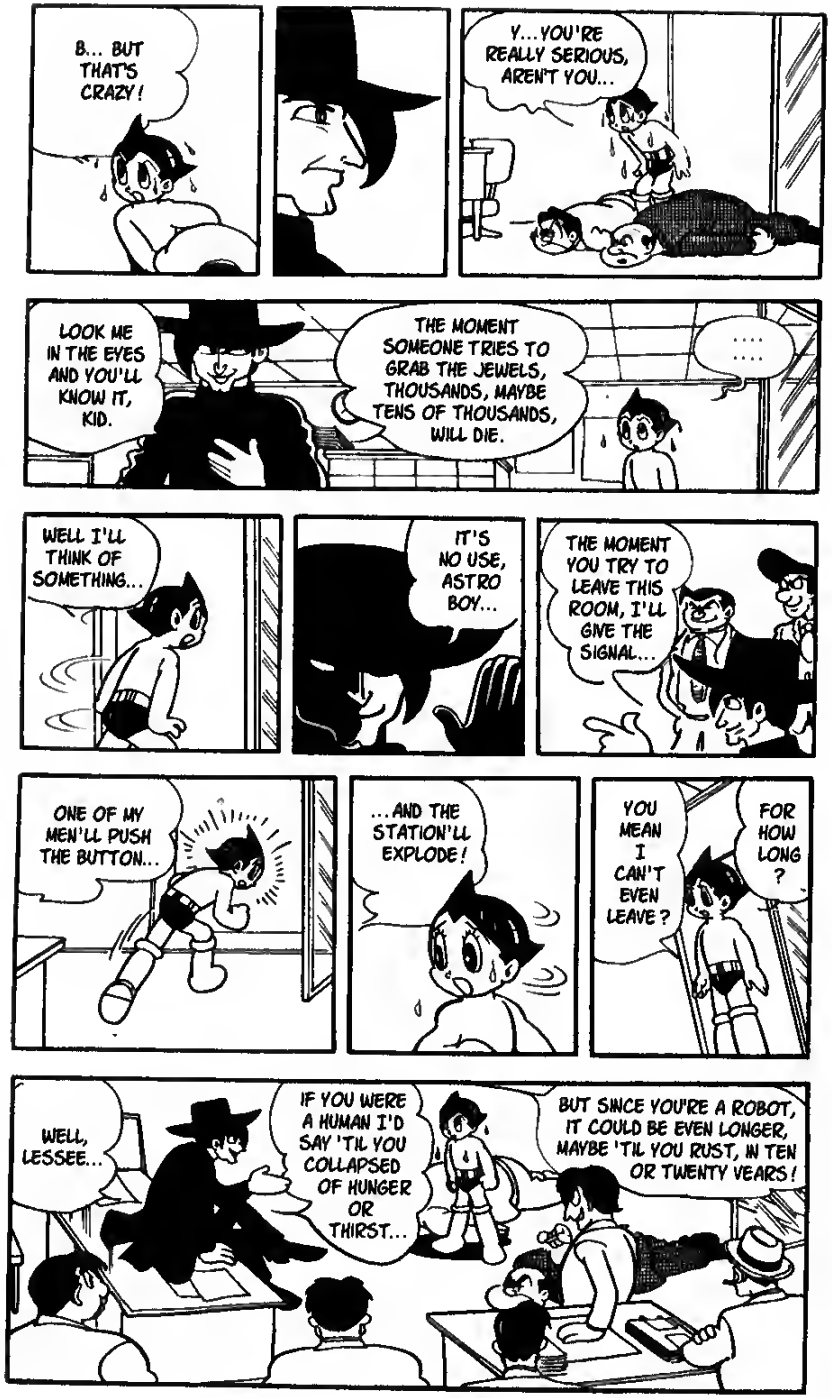
I'VE SEEH YOU ON TV TALK SHOWS BEFORE... AREH'T YOU SHUNSAKU BAN, THE PRIVATE EVE PEOPLE ARE TALKING ABOUT? SO WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, PRETEHDING TO BE A ROBOT?
....
....
WELL? STONY SILENCE IS IT?
WE NEED ANSWERS, MR. BAN...
TAKE HIS SUIT OFF, MEN...
HOLD HIM DOWN!
FWAP
WHA?!
WHA?!
WHERE'D YOU FIND THIS THING?!
IN YOUR INCINER-ATOR...
BUT WHY WOULD THERE BE A MASK USED BY A ROBOT BANK ROBBER HERE ANYWAY?
YOU MEANT TO DESTROY THE MASK, BUT UNLUCKY FOR YOU, IT DIDN'T BURN!

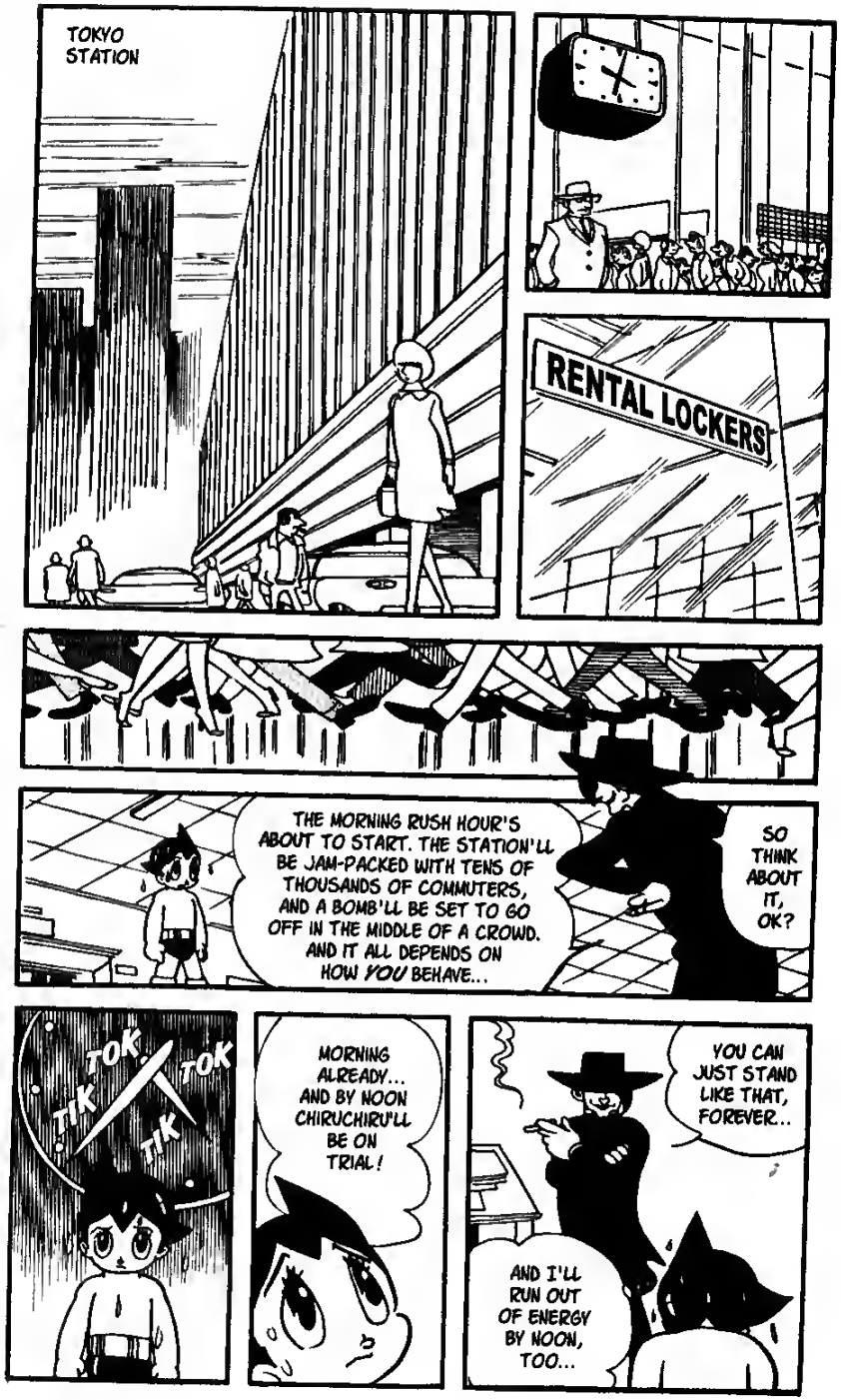

SOMEBODY OBVIOUSLY WORE THAT MASK...
... AND BROKE INTO A BANK PRETENDING TO BE A ROBOT!
THIS IS IMPORTANT EVIDENCE, SO I'M BORROWING IT!
NOT SO FAST, MR. BAN.
THE EXIT'S OVER THERE...
THANKS ...
I TOLD YOU TO GET RID OF THE MASK!
SORRY, BOSS... I DIDN'T REALIZE IT HADN'T BURNED UP...
WELL, THIS TIME MAKE SURE IT'S INCINERATED!
YESSIR...
AND GET RID OF THE PRIVATE EYE WHILE YOU'RE AT IT.
BUT HOW, BOSS?
SAME WAY AS THE MASK, STUPID!
ROAR
HOT ENOUGH TA MELT YER BONES...
ROAR


SORRY TA DO THIS TO YA, PAL...
BUT HERE GOES!
OMPH!
WHAP! SOMETHING CAME FLYING OUT OF THE FLAMES!
NOPE, I CAME DOWN THE CHIMNEY FOR YOU!
I WAS WATCHING EVERYTHING FROM OUTSIDE YOUR WINDOW!
I SAW YOU WITH THE MASK! I SAW YOU TRY TO KILL THE PRIVATE EYE!
DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE NOT THE BANK ROBBERS NOW!
ACK! ACK! ANY-THING YOU SAY!


SO IF YOU ROBBED THE BANK, WHERE ARE THE JEWELS?
TH..THE BOSS PUT 'EM ALL IN A LOCKER... IN TOKYO STATION...
TOKYO STATION? YOU BETTER BE TELLING THE TRUTH...
I'M GONNA TAKE YOU WITH US...
...SO YOU CAN TELL US WHICH LOCKER...
I'LL COME BACK FOR THE REST OF YOU GUYS LATER...
WHA? THE KID'S A ROBOT!
I DON'T BELIEVE MY EYES...
HOLD IT!
WHAT'S THE HURRY, ROBO-BOY?
HOW 'BOUT SHARING A CUP OF TEA BEFORE YOU GO?


WE'VE GOT LOTS TO TALK ABOUT.
SORRY, BUT I'VE GOTTA TAKE THESE GUYS TO THE POLICE STATION!
I'VE GOTTA PROVE CHIRU-CHIRU'S INNOCENT!
... YOU SURE ...
... YOU'RE REALLY ...
... A ROBOT?
MOST ROBOTS DON'T HAVE YOUR SENSE OF JUSTICE OR LEVEL OF UNDER-STANDING...
I BET YOU'RE REALLY A CYBORG... A HUMAN WITH A FEW ARTIFICIAL ORGANS... NO?
THAT'S WHAT YOU WANT TO TALK ABOUT?
HEH HEH... THE JEWELS ARE IN A LOCKER AT TOKYO STATION ...
BUT THEY'RE NOT JUST HIDDEN THERE... THEY'RE BOOBY-TRAPPED!
BOOBY-TRAPPED?
WITH A LITTLE DYNAMITE...
THE MOMENT YOU TOUCH THEM...
...EVERYTHING IN 500 YARDS, INCLUDING THE STATION, WILL BE BLOWN UP!


B... BUT THAT'S CRAZY!
Y...YOU'RE REALLY SERIOUS, AREN'T YOU...
LOOK ME IN THE EYES AND YOU'LL KNOW IT, KID.
THE MOMENT SOMEONE TRIES TO GRAB THE JEWELS, THOUSANDS, MAYBE TENS OF THOUSANDS, WILL DIE.
WELL I'LL THINK OF SOMETHING...
IT'S NO USE, ASTRO BOY...
THE MOMENT YOU TRY TO LEAVE THIS ROOM, I'LL GIVE THE SIGNAL...
ONE OF MY MEN'LL PUSH THE BUTTON...
...AND THE STATION'LL EXPLODE!
YOU MEAN I CAN'T EVEN LEAVE?
FOR HOW LONG?
WELL, LESSEE...
IF YOU WERE A HUMAN I'D SAY 'TIL YOU COLLAPSED OF HUNGER OR THIRST...
BUT SINCE YOU'RE A ROBOT, IT COULD BE EVEN LONGER, MAYBE 'TIL YOU RUST, IN TEN OR TWENTY YEARS!


TOKYO STATION
RENTAL LOCKERS
THE MORNING RUSH HOUR'S ABOUT TO START. THE STATION'LL BE JAM-PACKED WITH TENS OF THOUSANDS OF COMMUTERS, AND A BOMB'LL BE SET TO GO OFF IN THE MIDDLE OF A CROWD. AND IT ALL DEPENDS ON HOW *YOU* BEHAVE...
SO THINK ABOUT IT, OK?
TOK TIK TOK TIK
MORNING ALREADY... AND BY NOON CHIRUCHIRU'LL BE ON TRIAL!
YOU CAN JUST STAND LIKE THAT, FOREVER..
AND I'LL RUN OUT OF ENERGY BY NOON, TOO...

ASTRO'S ENERGY RUNS OUT

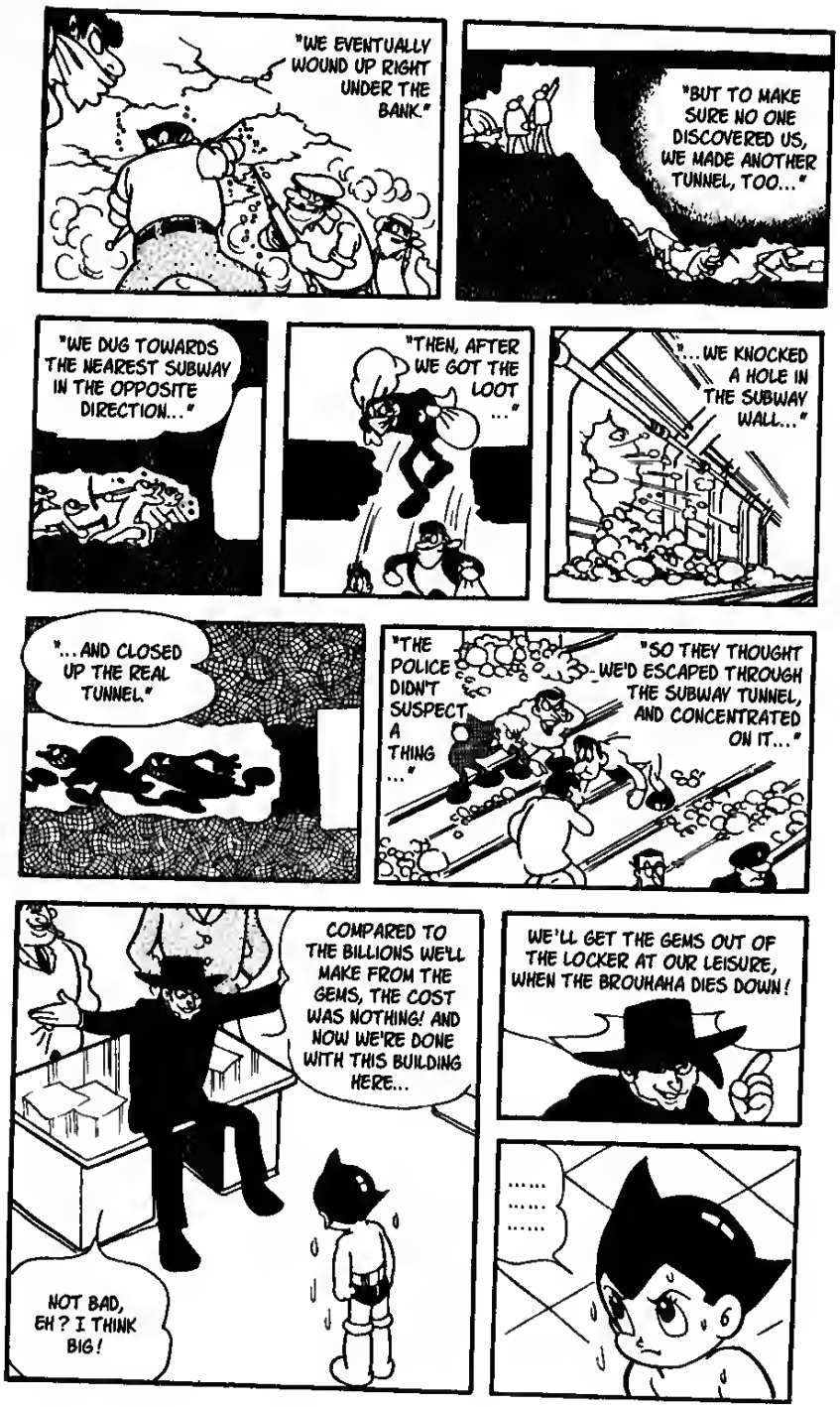
GET ANY SLEEP, CHIRU-CHIRU?
'COURSE, I S'POSE ROBOTS DON'T NEED ANY...
ALL NIGHT LONG, I THOUGHT ABOUT WHY HAS THIS HAPPENED TO ME...
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
EVERYBODY KNOWS YOU'RE THE SCOUNDREL WHO DID IT!
LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT A VISITOR, THOUGH...
PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU?
NOPE. A YOUNG GIRL...
I WONDER WHO IT IS...
ARE YOU THE ROBOT CHIRU-CHIRU?
YES, BUT WHO ARE YOU?
I'M SURUME.
A ROBOT NAMED ASTRO CAME TO SEE YOU, RIGHT?
ASTRO? AH, YES HE DID.

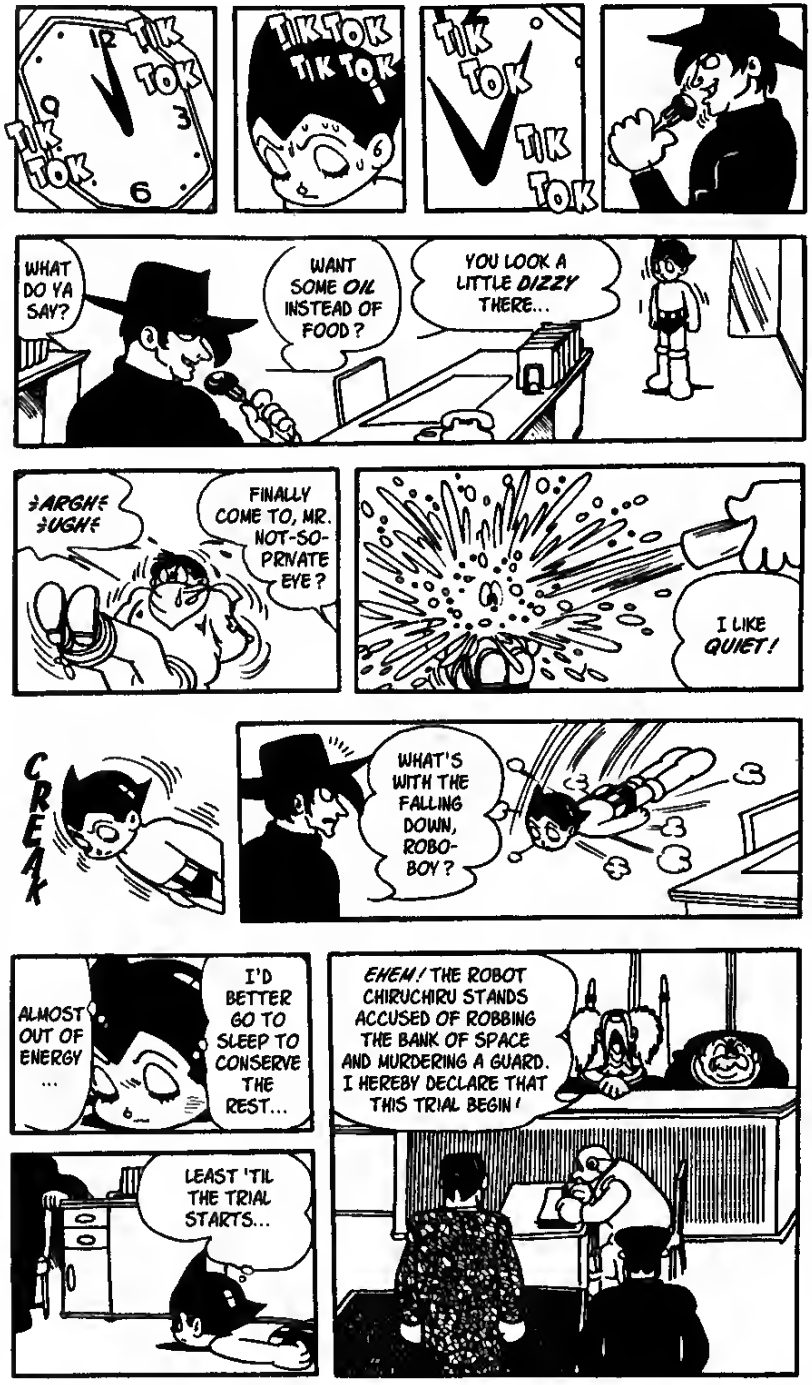
ASTRO FLEW OFF YESTERDAY, SWEARING HE WAS GOING TO SAVE YOU!
I KNOW. LAST NIGHT HE SAID HE'D BE MY LAWYER.
BUT WHERE IS HE NOW?
I DO NOT KNOW...
BUT I AM HAPPY NOW.
EVEN THOUGH WE'VE NEVER REALLY MET...
...HE'S MY FRIEND AND ALLY ...
BUT ASTRO'S ENERGY WILL RUN OUT BY NOON, AND UNLESS WE FIND HIM BY THEN HE'LL DIE!
BUT MY TRIAL STARTS AT NOON!
I KNOW ...
THAT'S WHY...
...I KNOW HE'LL SHOW UP THEN...
I HOPE SO...
HELLO? DADDY?
SURUME? WHERE'VE YOU BEEN ALL NIGHT?!
WHAT?! ASTRO'S MISSING?
IF WE DON'T FIND HIM BY NOON, HE'LL DIE SOMEPLACE HORRIBLE...
DO SOMETHING, DADDY!

SURUME! HE'LL ONLY LAST 'TIL NOON!
I JUST TOLD YOU THAT...
IT'LL BE A DISASTER IF HE KEELS OVER...
...IN SOME WEIRD PLACE AND WE CAN'T FIND HIM!
I KNOW, DADDY. THEY DON'T EVEN HANDLE DISAPPEARED ROBOT CASES AT THE POLICE DEPARTMENT.
YOU'VE GOT TO DO SOMETHING!
I LOVE YOU DADDY. YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT ASTRO, DON'T YOU?
OKAY, OKAY.
MY WILLFUL DAUGHTER!
♪YAWN♪
YOU'RE THE MANAGING DIRECTOR. I NEED YOU TO DO ME A FAVOR...
YOU KNOW THAT DOLL SENT FROM THE EMBASSY IN SAIGON?
I DON'T CARE HOW MUCH MONEY IT TAKES. JUST FIND IT!
YOU'RE THE PRESIDENT, SIR...
BUT IT'S MY JOB TO ASK YOU BLUNTLY...
WHY'S THAT DOLL WORTH SO MUCH TO YOU?
FIRST THE ENERGY TUBE, NOW THIS!
LOUSY TV RECEPTION
BECAUSE ASTRO'S MY PAL, THAT'S WHY!
WHAT DID YOU SAY, SIR?
UH OH...

YOU'RE PALS WITH A DOLL?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, SIR?
ER, NOTHING... IT'S NOTHING...
I JUST NEED YOU TO FIND HIM BEFORE NOON!
I WONDER WHAT THAT DOLL REALLY IS?
HE COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE A ROBOT.
OKAY, MEN. THE PRESIDENT WANTS US TO SEARCH FOR A DOLL NAMED ASTRO! IT'S AN ORDER!
RIGHT, NORTH AND WEST WARDS OF THE CITY!
MONEY'S NO OBJECT!
RIGHT... BEFORE NOON...
THIS CAN'T BE...
IT'S ALREADY 10 AM...
...AND NO SIGN OF ASTRO!
GNASH
TREMBLE
IN TWO MORE HOURS ASTRO'S ENERGY RUNS OUT!
RRRNGG
WHAT? NO TRACE OF HIM IN EITHER THE NORTH OR WEST WARDS?
DON'T SUPPOSE HE BURROWED INTO THE EARTH...

10:30 'N COUNTING ...
FEELING TIRED? 'DON'T S'POSE ROBOTS DO, HAH HAH!
LEMME TELL YOU A STORY TO PASS THE TIME... A YEAR AGO I HEARD ABOUT PLANS FOR THE BRITISH JEWELRY EXHIBITION...
"...I KNEW THE JEWELS'D BE STORED IN THE BANK OF SPACE..."
"SO I BOUGHT THIS BUILDING AND SET UP A DUMMY CORPORATION, AND THEN, USING A VARIETY OF FAKE NAMES..."
"...I RENTED UP ALL THE BASEMENTS IN A DIRECT LINE FROM HERE TO THE BANK..."
"THEN WE STARTED DIGGING A TUNNEL..."
WE WENT FROM BASEMENT TO BASEMENT...


"WE EVENTUALLY WOUND UP RIGHT UNDER THE BANK."
"BUT TO MAKE SURE NO ONE DISCOVERED US, WE MADE ANOTHER TUNNEL, TOO..."
"WE DUG TOWARDS THE NEAREST SUBWAY IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION..."
"THEN, AFTER WE GOT THE LOOT ..."
"...WE KNOCKED A HOLE IN THE SUBWAY WALL..."
"...AND CLOSED UP THE REAL TUNNEL."
"THE POLICE DIDN'T SUSPECT A THING ..."
"SO THEY THOUGHT WE'D ESCAPED THROUGH THE SUBWAY TUNNEL, AND CONCENTRATED ON IT..."
COMPARED TO THE BILLIONS WE'LL MAKE FROM THE GEMS, THE COST WAS NOTHING! AND NOW WE'RE DONE WITH THIS BUILDING HERE...
NOT BAD, EH? I THINK BIG!
WE'LL GET THE GEMS OUT OF THE LOCKER AT OUR LEISURE, WHEN THE BROUHAHA DIES DOWN!
.....
.....
.....

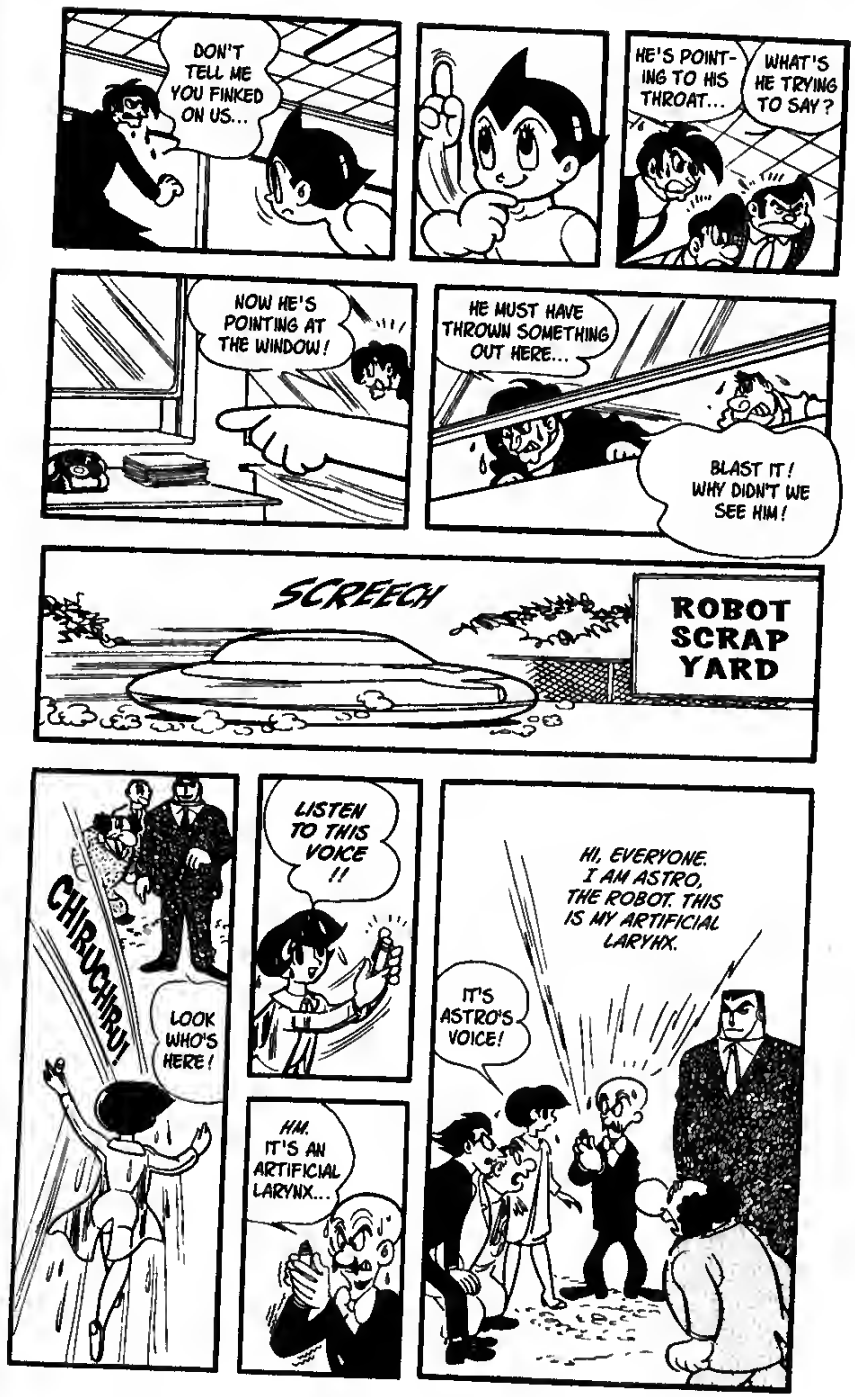

TIK TOK
TIK TOK TIK TOK
TIK TOK TIK TOK
WHAT DO YA SAY?
WANT SOME OIL INSTEAD OF FOOD?
YOU LOOK A LITTLE DIZZY THERE...
ARGH
UGH
FINALLY COME TO, MR. NOT-SO-PRIVATE EYE?
I LIKE QUIET!
CREAK
WHAT'S WITH THE FALLING DOWN, ROBO-BOY?
ALMOST OUT OF ENERGY ...
I'D BETTER GO TO SLEEP TO CONSERVE THE REST...
LEAST 'TIL THE TRIAL STARTS...
EHEM! THE ROBOT CHIRUCHIRU STANDS ACCUSED OF ROBBING THE BANK OF SPACE AND MURDERING A GUARD. I HEREBY DECLARE THAT THIS TRIAL BEGIN!

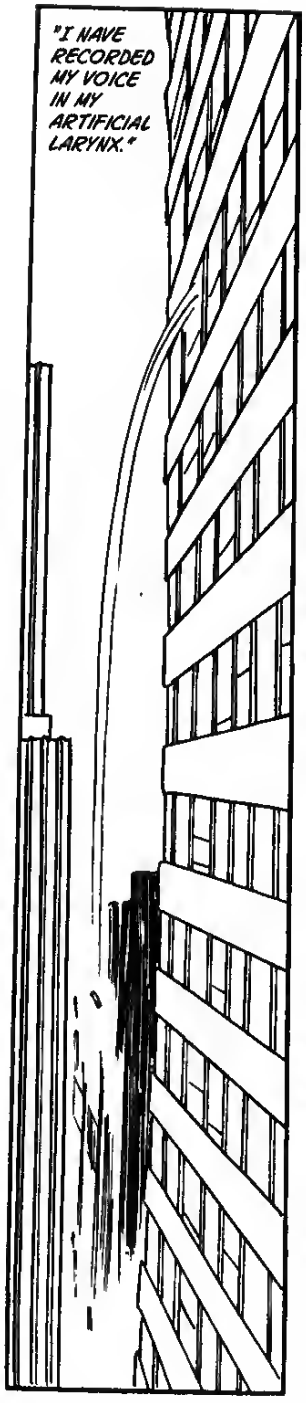
ROBOTS ARE TIN MEN! METAL JUNK!
I... I...
...ANYTHING A TIN MAN SAYS IS MEANINGLESS!
SO THE ROBOT IS AUTOMATICALLY GUILTY!!
THIS CONCLUDES THE PROSECUTION'S CASE. DO WE HAVE THE LAWYER FOR THE DEFENSE?
YOUR LAWYER, ASTRO, DOES NOT SEEM TO BE HERE, ROBOT...
THAT IS CORRECT.
THEY'LL DECIDE IF YOU'RE GUILTY OR NOT, CHIRU-CHIRU... AND IF YOU'RE GUILTY THEY'LL TURN YOU INTO SCRAP!
IT CAN'T BE HELPED, PRO-FESSOR...
HOW COULD A GREAT ROBOT LIKE THIS BE GUILTY?! I'M BLASTED IF I'M GONNA LET 'EM CONVICT YOU!
TRAMP TRAMP
...AND THE VERDICT IS...
...GUILTY!
WHAT THE?!
THE DEFENDANT SHALL IMMEDIATELY BE TURNED INTO SCRAP, AND DUMPED IN THE OCEAN!

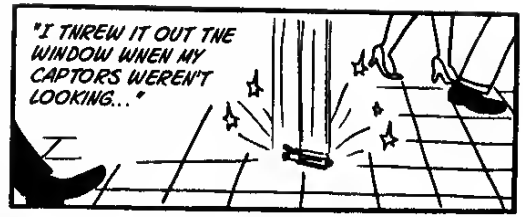
CHAK
CHAAK
OFF WE GO!
ROAR
THIS IS TERRIBLE!
IT'S UNCIVILIZED!
AH, BUT PROFESSOR... I BET YOU NORMALLY DON'T WEEP WHEN YOU THROW AWAY JUNK, DO YOU?
BUT THEY DRAGGED HIM OFF LIKE THAT...
SEE?
'N BESIDES, ROBOTS AREN'T JUNK!
NO, PROFESSOR, THEY ARE WHEN THEY STOP WORKING...
ROBOT SCRAP YARD
GOODBYE, PROFESSOR. THANK YOU FOR EVERYTHING ...
CHIRUCHIRU... I CAN'T BELIEVE THIS... FORGIVE ME IF I WEEP... I KNOW YOU WOULD, TOO, IF YOU COULD...
TIME'S UP, PROFESSOR...

THREE PM...
THAT ROBOT CHIRUCHIRU MUST'VE BEEN EXECUTED BY NOW...
NEH NEH...
WONDER HOW THEY EXECUTE ROBOTS?
BET THEY DON'T HANG 'EM...
NAW, THEY TURN 'EM INTO JUNK, LIKE OLD CARS...
WHAT'S UP WITH ROBO-BOY HERE?
HASN'T SAID A WORD RECENTLY...
HEY, LOOK AT THIS, BOSS!
HE'S CRYING!
NEVER SAW A ROBOT CRY...
MAYBE HE'S A HUMAN, AFTER ALL...
AIEEE!!
FLASH
I...I CAN'T SEE!
ARCHI
VOOOSH

HALP
OWWW!
WHY, YOU...
IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU'RE GONNA ACT, WE'LL SHOW NO MERCY!
ONE FLICK OF THIS SWITCH, AND TOKYO STATION BLOWS UP!
HOW 'BOUT THAT, EH? IT'S ALL OVER!
CHK
JUST WATCH, ROBO-BOY, AS TOKYO STATION'S BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS!
SHOULD BLOW SKY HIGH ANY SECOND...
RATS! WHY DIDN'T IT WORK!!?
CHK CHK CHK CHK
WHEEEE
WHEEEE
IT'S SUPPOSED TO, AT LEAST...
COP CARS! LET'S RUN FOR IT!
HOW'D THEY KNOW WE WERE HERE?


DON'T TELL ME YOU FINKED ON US...
HE'S POINTING TO HIS THROAT...
WHAT'S HE TRYING TO SAY?
NOW HE'S POINTING AT THE WINDOW!
HE MUST HAVE THROWN SOMETHING OUT HERE...
BLAST IT! WHY DIDN'T WE SEE HIM!
SCREECH
ROBOT SCRAP YARD
CHIRUCHIRU!
LOOK WHO'S HERE!
LISTEN TO THIS VOICE!!
HM. IT'S AN ARTIFICIAL LARYNX...
IT'S ASTRO'S VOICE!
HI, EVERYONE. I AM ASTRO, THE ROBOT. THIS IS MY ARTIFICIAL LARYNX.


"I NAVE RECORDED MY VOICE IN MY ARTIFICIAL LARYNX."

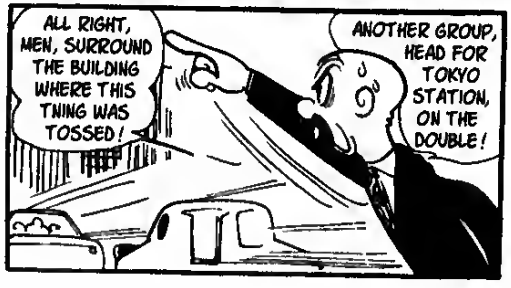

"I TNREW IT OUT TNE WINDOW WNEN MY CAPTORS WEREN'T LOOKING..."

?
"...AND ASKED WHOEVER PICKED IT UP TO DELIVER IT TO TNE POLICE."

TNE STOLEN JEWELS ARE IN A LOCKER IN TOKYO STATION.

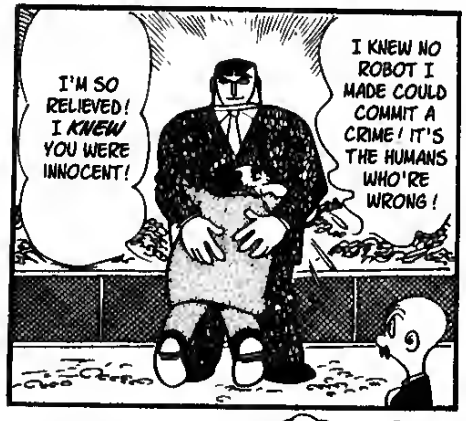
...BUT THE LOCKER'S SET TO BLOW UP WNEN OPENED!
LET'S GO!

THE TRUE BANK ROBBERS ARE IN TNE BUILDING WNERE MY LARYNX WAS FOUND. CHIRUCNIRU'S INNOCENT, SO PLEASE LET NIM GO!


ALL RIGHT, MEN, SURROUND THE BUILDING WHERE THIS TNING WAS TOSSED!
ANOTHER GROUP, HEAD FOR TOKYO STATION, ON THE DOUBLE!

SO YOU KNOW THE TRUTH NOW, RIGHT INSPECTOR? THAT CHIRUCHIRU'S INNOCENT!?

THEY KNOW THE REAL CRIMINAL, SO THERE'S NO NEED TO EXECUTE CHIRUCHIRU NOW...
CHIRU-CHIRU! WE MADE IT!


I'M SO RELIEVED! I KNEW YOU WERE INNOCENT!
I KNEW NO ROBOT I MADE COULD COMMIT A CRIME! IT'S THE HUMANS WHO'RE WRONG!

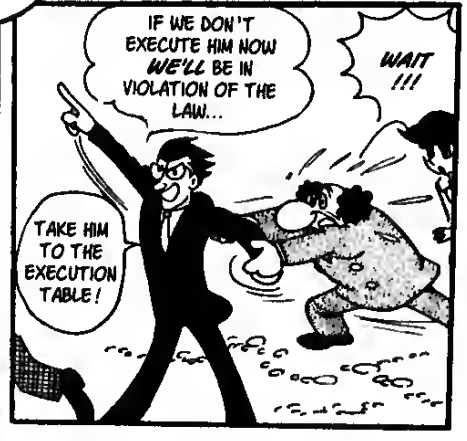
ALMOST TIME FOR THE EXECUTION, PROFESSOR...
EXECUTION? WHOSE EXECUTION, INSPECTOR!?

CHIRUCHIRU, WNO ELSE? THEY'RE TURNING NIM INTO SCRAP.

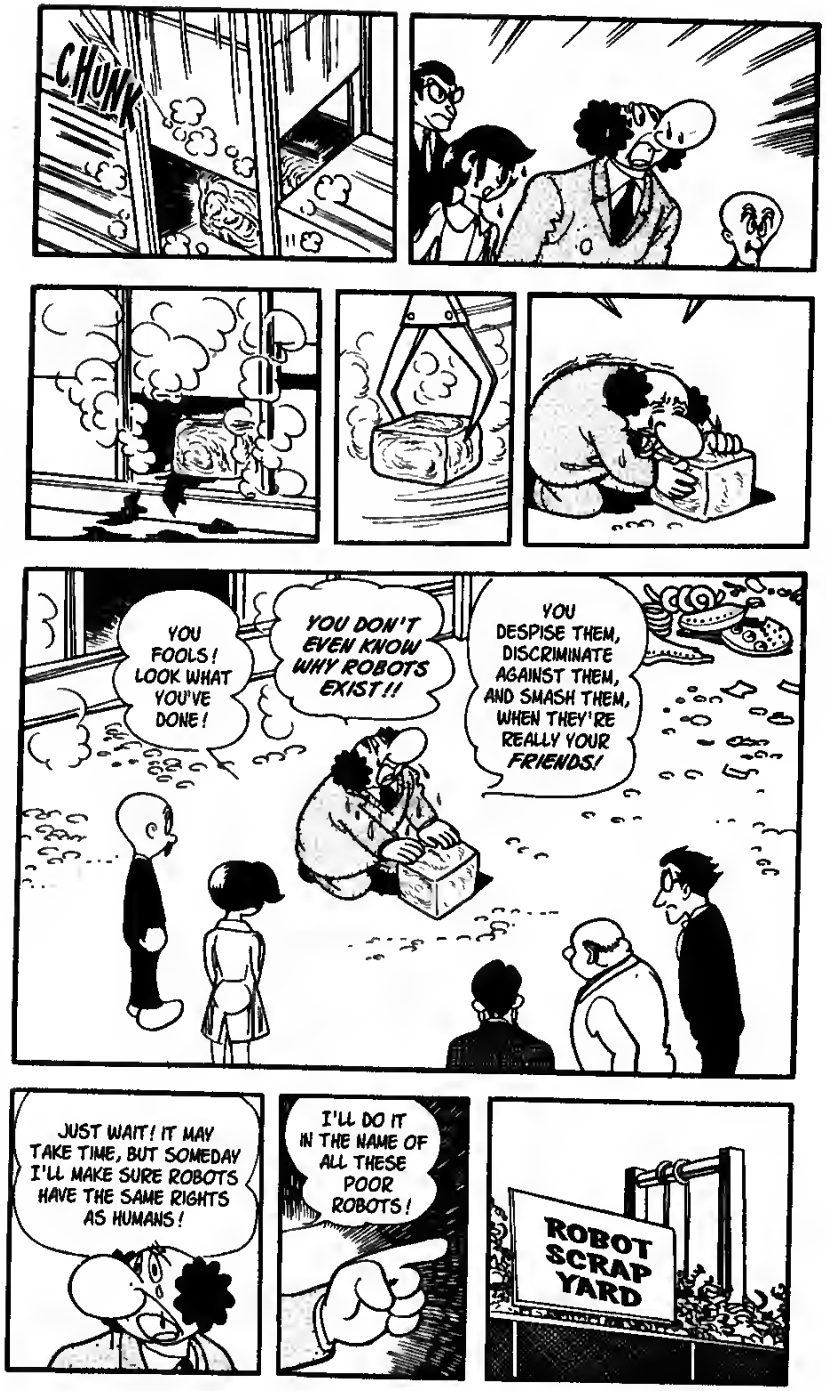
WHAT?!

BUT HE'S INNOCENT! YOU CAN'T EXECUTE HIM NOW!

WELL, YOU SAY HE'S INNOCENT, BUT THE COURT SAYS HE'S GUILTY!
WE'VE GOT A WRITTEN VERDICT AND AN ORDER!
B... BUT...

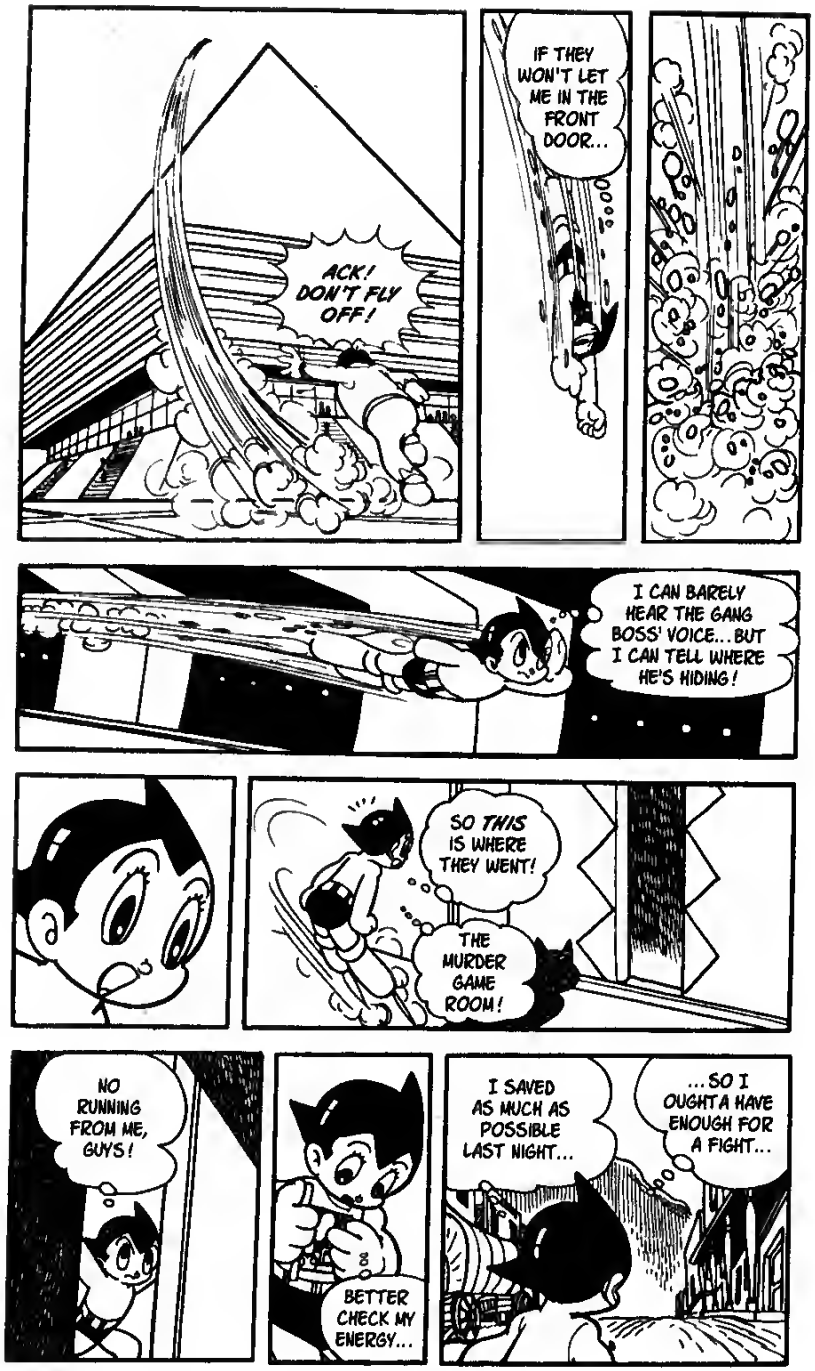

IF WE DON'T EXECUTE HIM NOW WE'LL BE IN VIOLATION OF THE LAW...
WAIT !!!
TAKE HIM TO THE EXECUTION TABLE!

DON'T DO THIS, PLEASE!
CAN'T STOP THE PROCEDURE WITHOUT WRITTEN PROOF OF INNOCENCE!
PLEASE, KIND SIR! SHOW MERCY!
MERCY?! WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A ROBOT!
CAREFUL, PROFESSOR, OR YOU'LL BE CRUSHED, TOO!
CHIRUCHIRU!!!
YOU WANT TO DESTROY ROBOTS! YOU'RE DESPICABLE!
NO! I'M JUST FOLLOWING PROCEDURES!
SMASH
START THE EXECUTION!
CRUNCH
CHIRUCHIRU!


CHUNK
YOU FOOLS! LOOK WHAT YOU'VE DONE!
YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW WHY ROBOTS EXIST!!
YOU DESPISE THEM, DISCRIMINATE AGAINST THEM, AND SMASH THEM, WHEN THEY'RE REALLY YOUR FRIENDS!
JUST WAIT! IT MAY TAKE TIME, BUT SOMEDAY I'LL MAKE SURE ROBOTS HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS HUMANS!
I'LL DO IT IN THE NAME OF ALL THESE POOR ROBOTS!
ROBOT SCRAP YARD

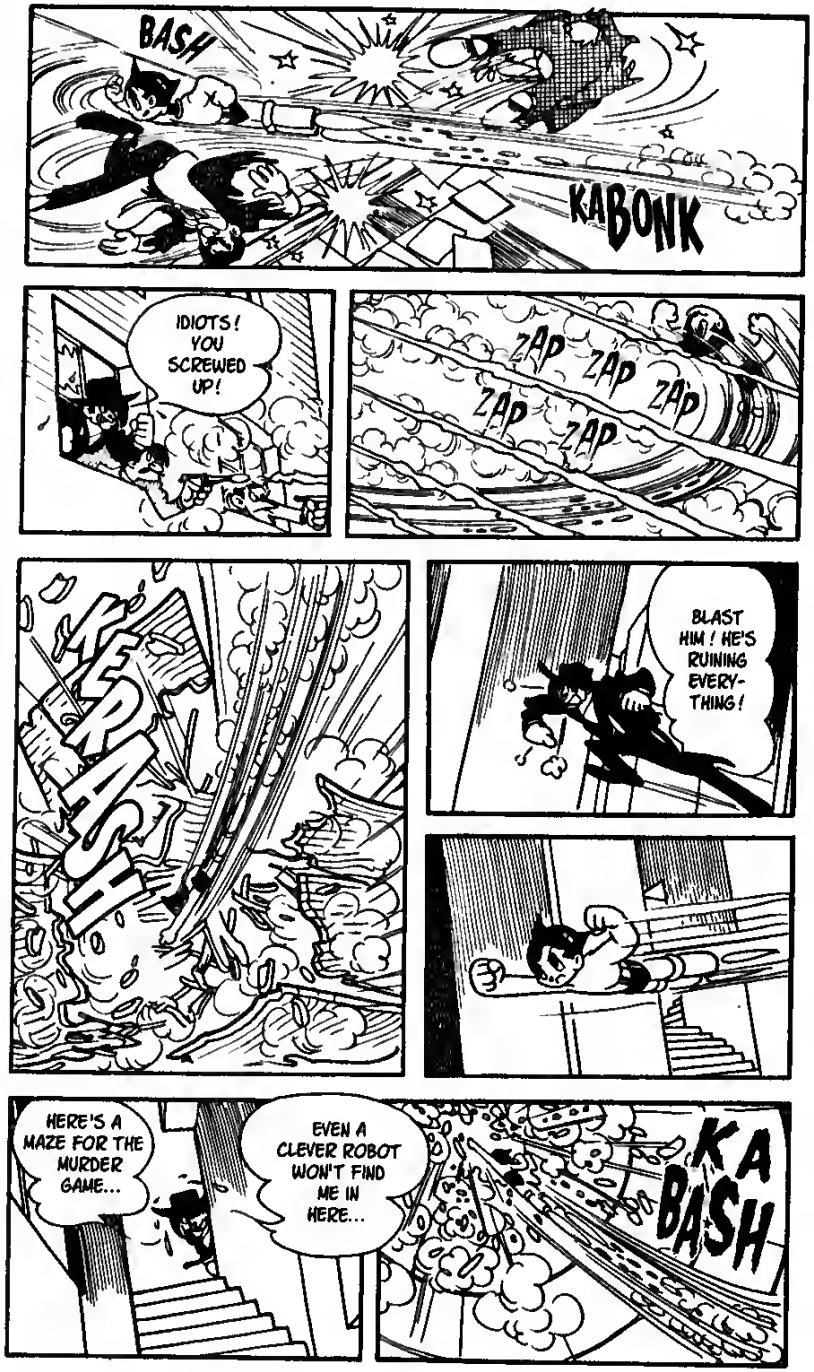
WHEEE WHEEE
A POLICE RAID, EH? AND YOU PROB'LY THINK I'M FINISHED, DON'T YOU? HA HA...
WELL, I DON'T GO THAT EASY, ROBO-BOY!
I KNOW YOU'RE WONDERING HOW, BUT I AM GOING TO ESCAPE!
I'VE STILL GOT A BUNCH OF TRICKS, LIKE THIS BUTTON HERE...
ALL I HAVE TO DO IS PUSH IT...
...AND SUDDENLY, THE WHOLE BUILDING'S ENVELOPED IN THICK BLACK SMOKE...
FSSSSSH
ARGH!
FWISSSS
ARGHE
UGHE
ARGHE
WHEW! I WAS AFRAID THAT WAS POISON GAS!
DOWN WE GO, GUYS!
WE'LL USE THE UNDERGROUND PASSAGE WE MADE TO ROB THE BANK!

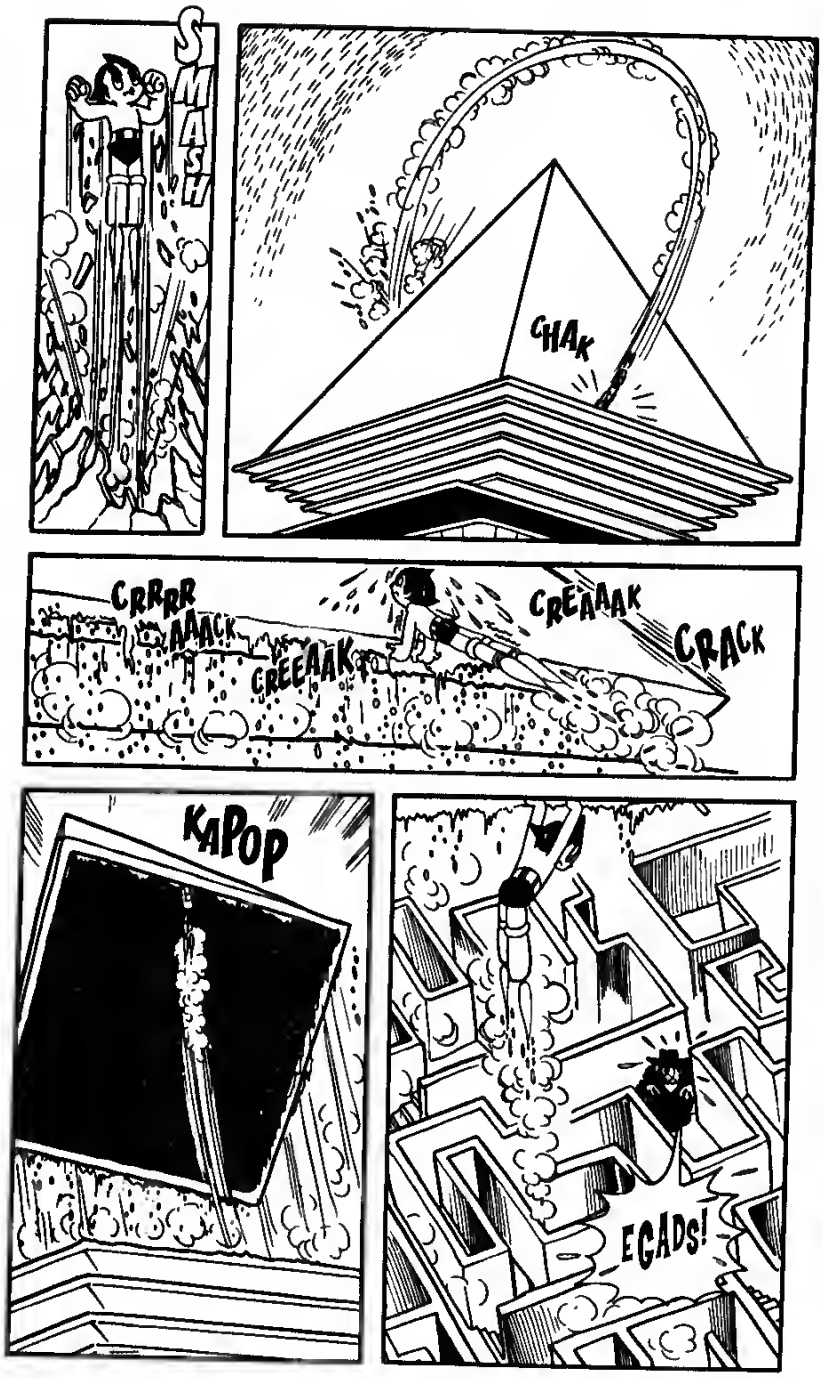
HURRY UP, WILL YA?!
I CAN'T! SOMEONE'S IN FRONT OF ME!
WHERE'RE WE GOING?
SOME PLACE THEY'LL NEVER SUSPECT!
WE'RE GONNA GO UNDER-GROUND AGAIN?
DON'T BE STUPID. WE'RE NOT MOLES!
THERE! LOOK!
THAT'S IT... THE FUN ZONE!
I KNOW... WE'RE GOING TO THE MURDER GAME ROOM!
...THERE'S BUILDINGS AND TONS OF WEAPONS THERE!
HAALP!
WHAT ON EARTH ARE YOU?
ARE YOU A ROBOT? WHY DON'T YOU ANSWER?
STOP! WHERE'RE YOU GOING?!
HEY! THAT'S THE FUN ZONE! ROBOTS AREN'T ALLOWED!
WAIT! WAIT FOR ME!!

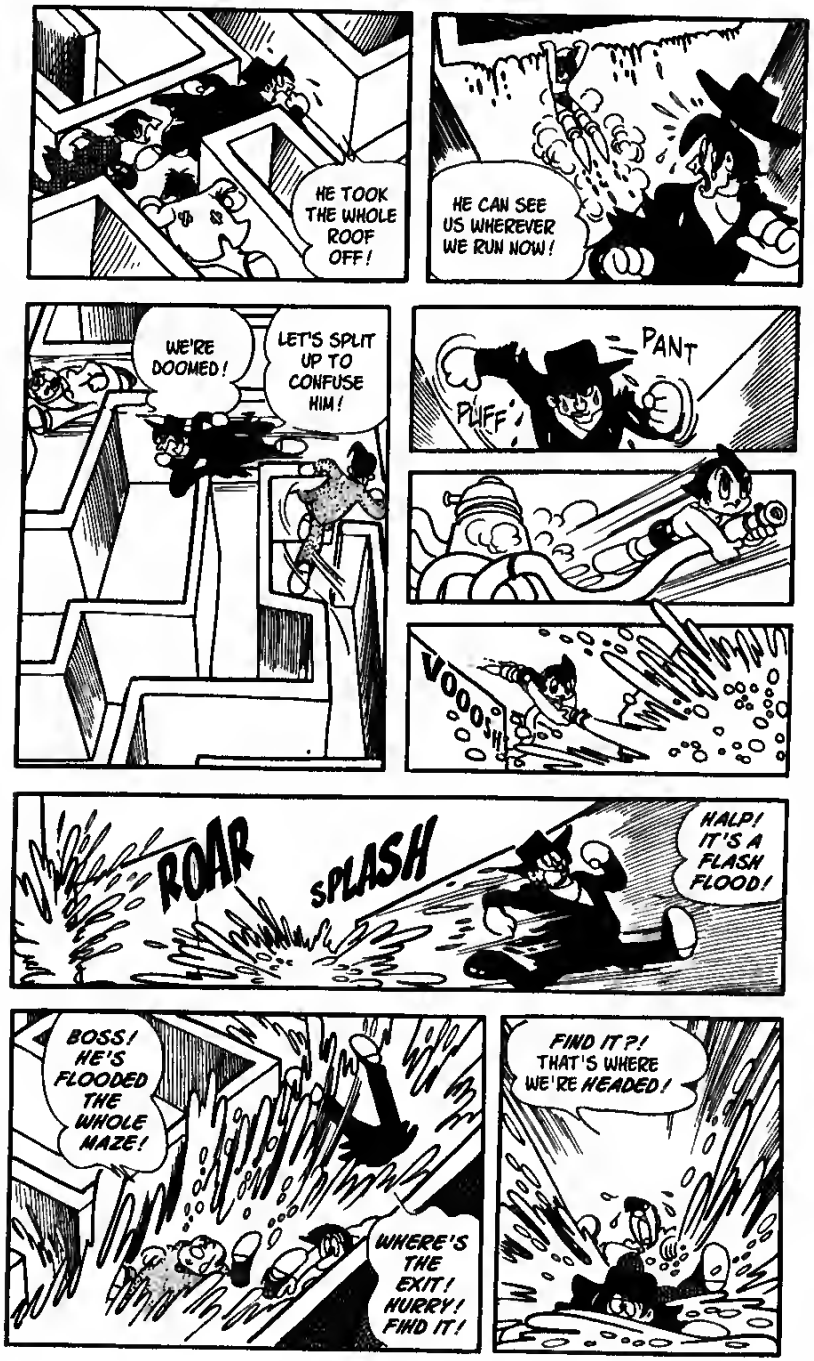

ACK! DON'T FLY OFF!
IF THEY WON'T LET ME IN THE FRONT DOOR...
I CAN BARELY HEAR THE GANG BOSS' VOICE... BUT I CAN TELL WHERE HE'S HIDING!
SO THIS IS WHERE THEY WENT!
THE MURDER GAME ROOM!
NO RUNNING FROM ME, GUYS!
BETTER CHECK MY ENERGY...
I SAVED AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE LAST NIGHT...
...SO I OUGHT A HAVE ENOUGH FOR A FIGHT...

COR. JACSON'S SHOP
BARBER
THE ROBOT'S HERE, BOSS, ALL ALONE...
ROBO-BOY, EH? WHAT'S THE BEST WAY TO GET RID OF HIM?
A MAGNO-GUN'D DESTROY HIS ELECTRO-BRAIN IN A JIFFY, BUT WE DON'T HAVE ONE...
HOW 'BOUT A BEAM SNIPER RIFLE?
.. WON'T WORK...
BUT I'VE GOT ANOTHER IDEA...
TRAMP
TRAMP
TRAMP
TRAMP
GREAT! HE PICKED IT UP!!
LET'S HOPE IT WORKS!

HE'S BEEN QUIET 'CUZ HIS ARTIFICIAL LARYNX IS BROKEN...
.....
.....
...SO WHEN HE PICKS UP THAT NEW LARYNX...
HE'LL OPEN HIS BODY TO PUT IT IN...
...AND THAT'S WHEN WE PUT A BULLET INSIDE HIM...
READY? WE'LL ONLY HAVE A SECOND. SHOOT THE INSTANT HE OPENS HIMSELF UP...
.....
.....
HE'S THINKING ABOUT IT...
WHA? HE'S STARTING TO TAKE HIS HEAD OFF!
IT'S OFF!
FIRE! NOW!
KER BLAM
KAZING
BLAST! I MISSED!
RUN FOR IT!
VOOSH

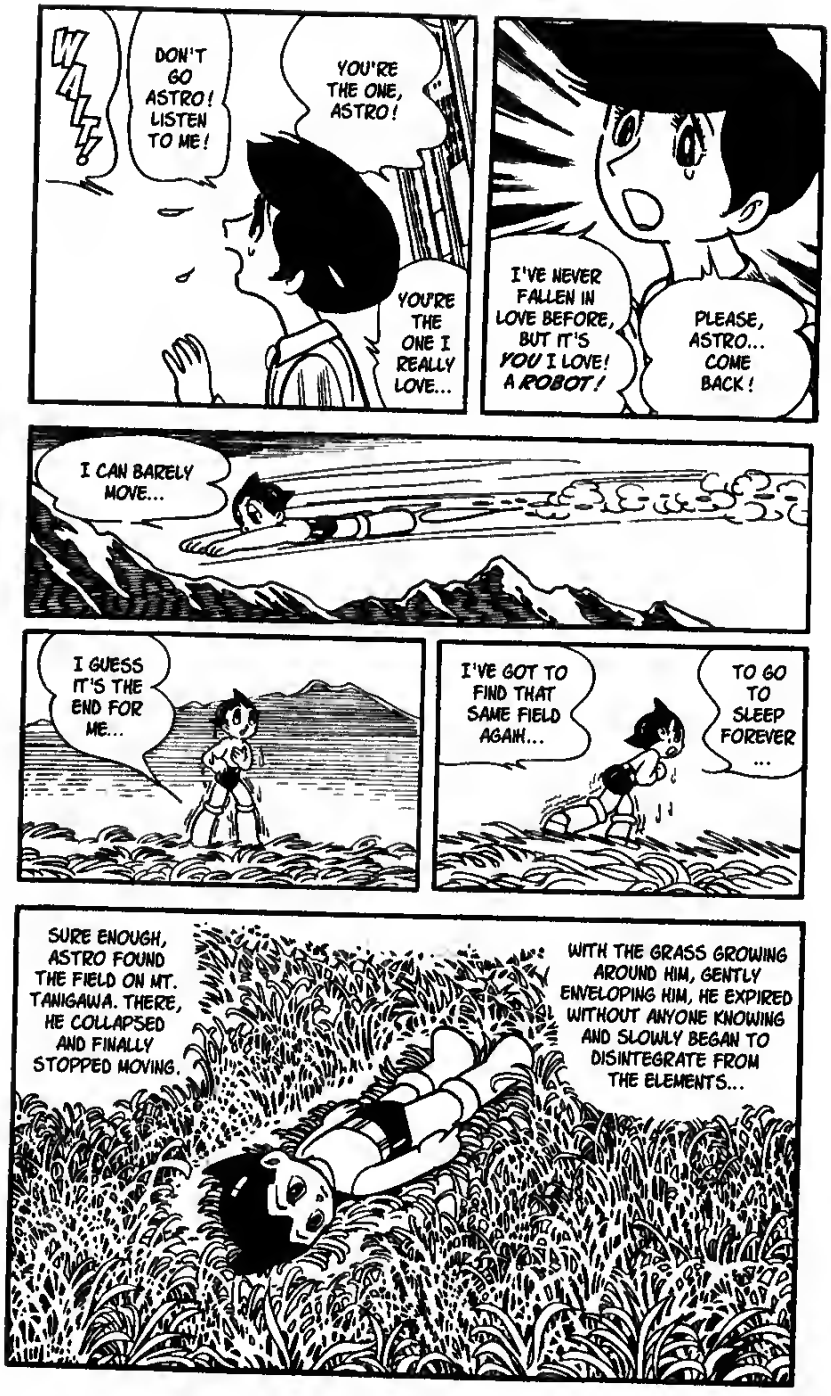

BASH
KABONK
IDIOTS! YOU SCREWED UP!
ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP
KRASH!
BLAST HIM! HE'S RUINING EVERY-THING!
HERE'S A MAZE FOR THE MURDER GAME...
EVEN A CLEVER ROBOT WON'T FIND ME IN HERE...
KA BASH


SMASH
CHAK
CRRRR
AAAACK
CREEAAK
CREAAAK
CRACK
KAPOP
EGADS!


HE TOOK THE WHOLE ROOF OFF!
HE CAN SEE US WHEREVER WE RUN NOW!
WE'RE DOOMED!
LET'S SPLIT UP TO CONFUSE HIM!
PANT
PUFF
VOOOSH
ROAR
SPLASH
HALP! IT'S A FLASH FLOOD!
BOSS! HE'S FLOODED THE WHOLE MAZE!
WHERE'S THE EXIT! HURRY! FIND IT!
FIND IT?! THAT'S WHERE WE'RE HEADED!

SHOOSH
AH
UNCH
ARCH
I GIVE UP...
ASTRO!
EEK!
ASTRO, HANG IN THERE! LOOK, HERE'S YOUR ARTIFICIAL LARYNX!
SURUME...
YOU'VE SAVED THE DAY, ASTRO...
THE POLICE GOT THE JEWELS BACK, AND CAUGHT THE CRIMINALS, TOO...
EVERYONE'S BEEN LOOKING FOR YOU!
DON'T WORRY, I DIDN'T TELL ANYONE YOUR SECRET...
WHAT ABOUT CHIRUCHIRU ...?
I'M SORRY, ASTRO... HE WAS SCRAPPED AND DUMPED IN THE OCEAN...
TO THE END, HE WAS GRATEFUL FOR WHAT YOU DID...

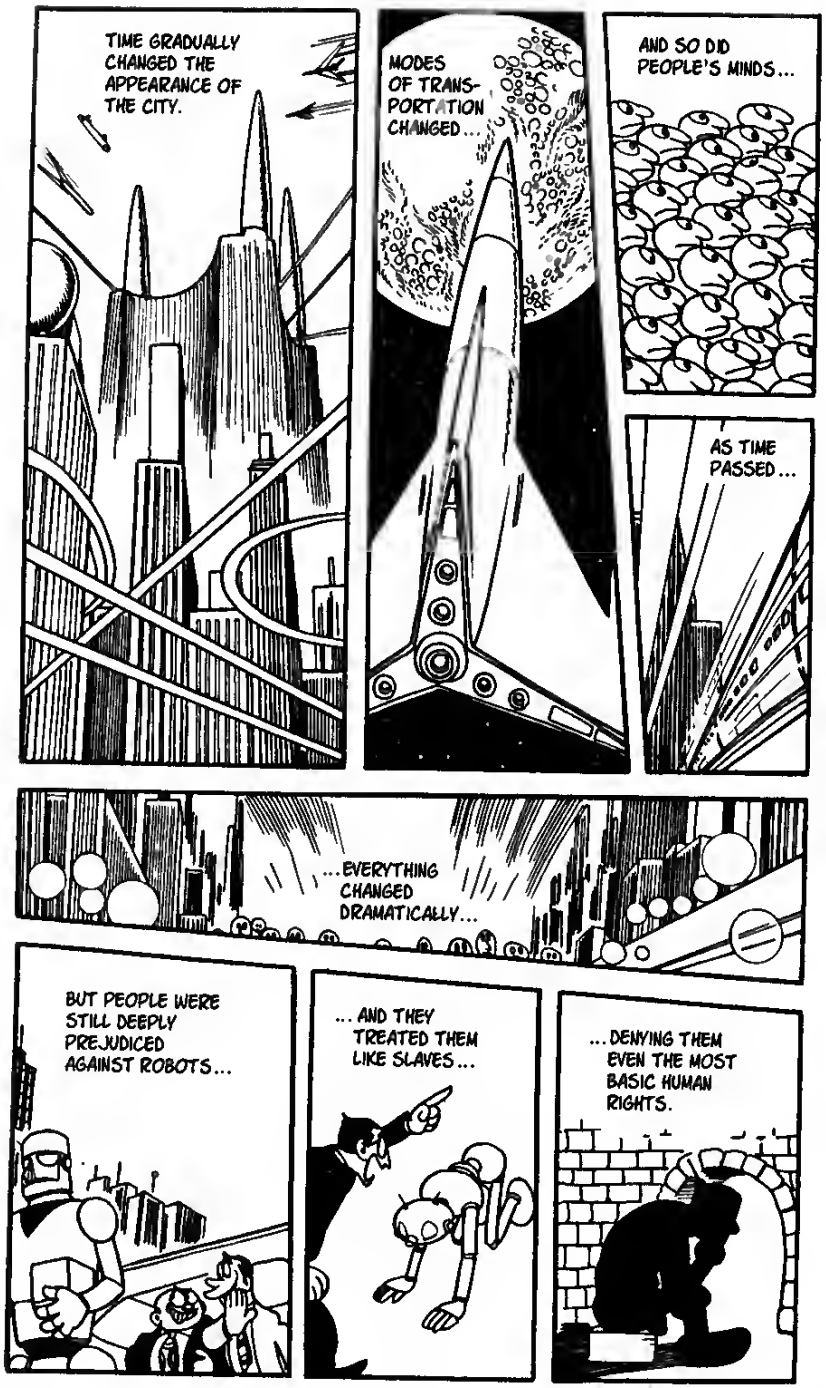
SURUME... I'M ALMOST OUT OF ENERGY...
LET'S GO HOME THEN...
I CAN'T. I'D JUST BE A BURDEN ON YOUR FATHER...
A BURDEN ?
ENERGY TUBES ARE REALLY EXPENSIVE, AND HE'LL GO BANKRUPT IF HE BUYS ANOTHER ONE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THAT, ASTRO. JUST HAVE HIM BUY MORE...
BUT THAT'S NOT ALL... SOME OF MY OTHER PARTS ARE WEARING OUT, TOO...
... AND IN 1993 NO ONE CAN MAKE THEM YET...
I'M GRATEFUL FOR EVERYTHING YOU'VE DONE, BUT IT'S TIME FOR ME TO LEAVE NOW...
TO LEAVE ?
THE LAST TWENTY-FOUR HOURS HAVE BEEN WONDERFUL FOR ME...
BUT WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
TELL YOUR DAD THANKS! I HOPE YOU HAVE A HAPPY LIFE AND A HAPPY MARRIAGE!
GOOD BYE, SURUME.
I'M GOING TO SLEEP AGAIN.


WAH!
DON'T GO ASTRO! LISTEN TO ME!
YOU'RE THE ONE, ASTRO!
YOU'RE THE ONE I REALLY LOVE...
I'VE NEVER FALLEN IN LOVE BEFORE, BUT IT'S YOU I LOVE! A ROBOT!
PLEASE, ASTRO... COME BACK!
I CAN BARELY MOVE...
I GUESS IT'S THE END FOR ME...
I'VE GOT TO FIND THAT SAME FIELD AGAIN...
TO GO TO SLEEP FOREVER ...
SURE ENOUGH, ASTRO FOUND THE FIELD ON MT. TANIGAWA. THERE, HE COLLAPSED AND FINALLY STOPPED MOVING.
WITH THE GRASS GROWING AROUND HIM, GENTLY ENVELOPING HIM, HE EXPIRED WITHOUT ANYONE KNOWING AND SLOWLY BEGAN TO DISINTEGRATE FROM THE ELEMENTS...

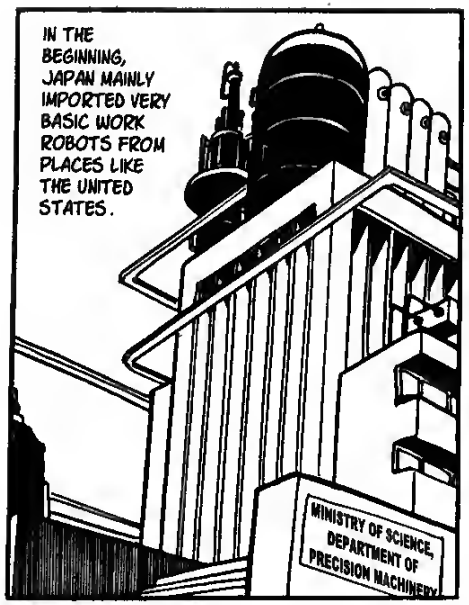
THERE'S NO WAY THIS SHOULD HAVE HAPPENED!
THE BANK OF SPACE WAS ROBBED...
MY BELOVED ROBOT CHIRUCHIRU WAS ARRESTED AND EXECUTED..
AND THEN THERE'S THE MYSTERIOUS BOY...
...WHO APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE AND SAVED YOU, SHUNSAKU BAN!!
AND YOU'RE SAYING IT WAS A ROBOT, RIGHT?
NO DOUBT ABOUT IT, PROFESSOR. I'D BET A MILLION ON IT!
AND YOU SAY HE COULD FLY THROUGH THE AIR?
RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES!
YOU SURE HE DIDN'T SAY HIS NAME WAS ASTRO?
HE DID... IT WAS ASTRO ...
BUT THAT'S THE BOY WHO WORKED IN MY LAB 24 YEARS AGO!

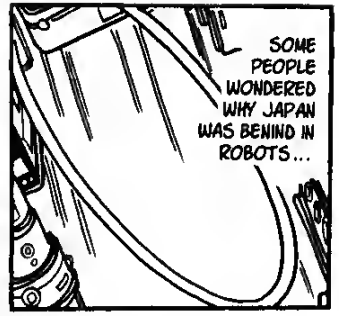
I WAS STILL TRYING TO DEVELOP ROBOTS THEN!
HE CAME TO MY PLACE WITH A BOY AND A STRANGE GIRL AND WANTED WORK...
DR. WHITEBEARD! DON'T YOU REMEMBER? IT WAS 24 YEARS AGO!
I FOR-GOTTEN ...
HE WAS A GOOD BOY, AND SURE DIDN'T SEEM LIKE A ROBOT...
BUT HOW COULD THERE HAVE BEEN A ROBOT LIKE THAT TWENTY-FOUR YEARS AGO?
"BUT WHEN HE STARTED ACTING STRANGE, I QUESTIONED HIM, AND HE TOOK OFF INTO THE AIR AND NEVER CAME BACK. IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I REALIZED HE WAS REALLY A ROBOT..."
HERE'S WHAT I THINK. I THINK HE CAME FROM THE FUTURE.
B... BUT THAT'S CRAZY!
I DON'T KNOW HOW HE CAME FROM THE FUTURE...
BUT I KNOW THAT SOMEHOW, HE DID.
FRANKLY, IT'S GIVEN ME RENEWED CONFIDENCE ...
ALL MY RESEARCH ON ROBOTS OVER THE LAST FEW DECADES CAN NOT HAVE BEEN IN VAIN.

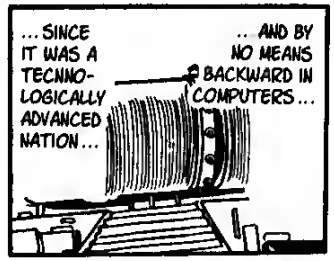
DR. TENMA

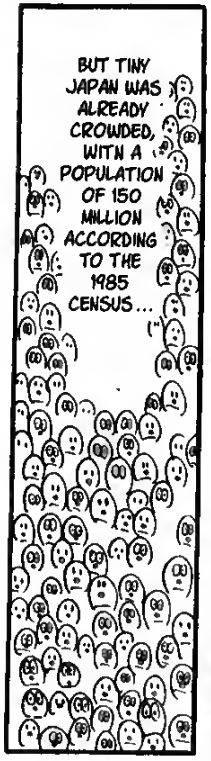

TIME GRADUALLY CHANGED THE APPEARANCE OF THE CITY.
MODES OF TRANS-PORTATION CHANGED...
AND SO DID PEOPLE'S MINDS...
AS TIME PASSED...
...EVERYTHING CHANGED DRAMATICALLY...
BUT PEOPLE WERE STILL DEEPLY PREJUDICED AGAINST ROBOTS...
... AND THEY TREATED THEM LIKE SLAVES...
...DENYING THEM EVEN THE MOST BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS.

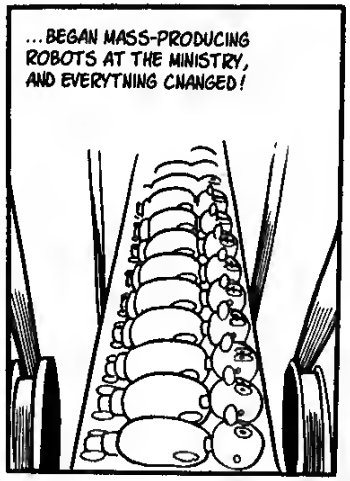
IN 1983...
PROFESSOR JAMES DALTON DEVELOPED AN ARTIFICIAL HUMAN SKIN FROM PLASTIC.
ROBOTS THAT UNTIL THEN HAD LOOKED LIKE METAL MEN...
...COULD NOW WEAR DALTON'S SKIN...
...AND LOOK JUST LIKE HUMANS!
IN 1987...
ARTIFICIAL SKIN WAS REFINED...
ON ROBOTS, IT WAS HEAT RESISTANT AND WOULD NOT MELT OR TEAR.
SOME HUMANS EVEN STARTED WEARING ARTIFICIAL SKIN, SO THEY WOULDN'T FEEL ANYTHING IF THEY WERE PUNCHED OR PINCHED.
THESE PEOPLE, IN PARTICULAR, WERE SAID TO "HAVE THICK SKINS."

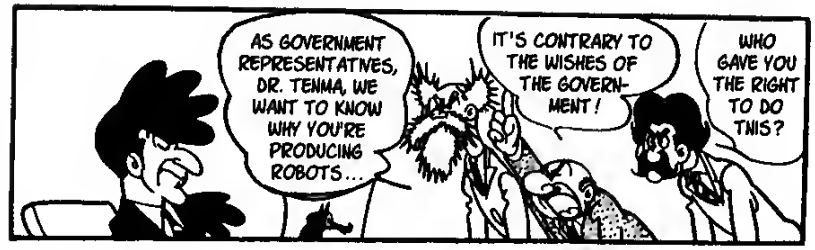

IN THE BEGINNING, JAPAN MAINLY IMPORTED VERY BASIC WORK ROBOTS FROM PLACES LIKE THE UNITED STATES.
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY

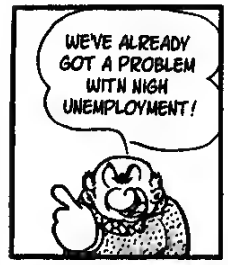


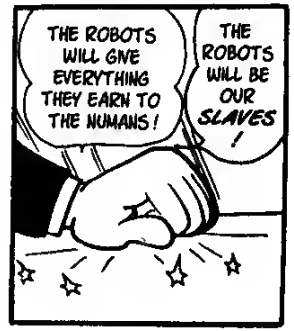




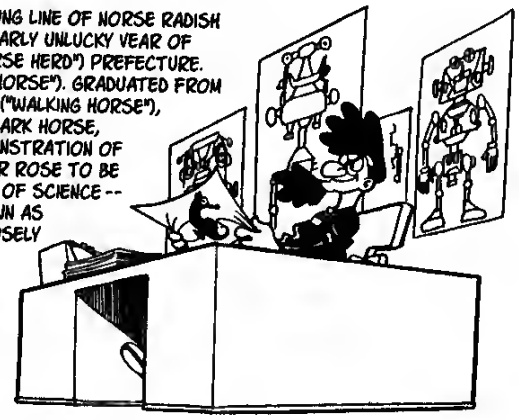


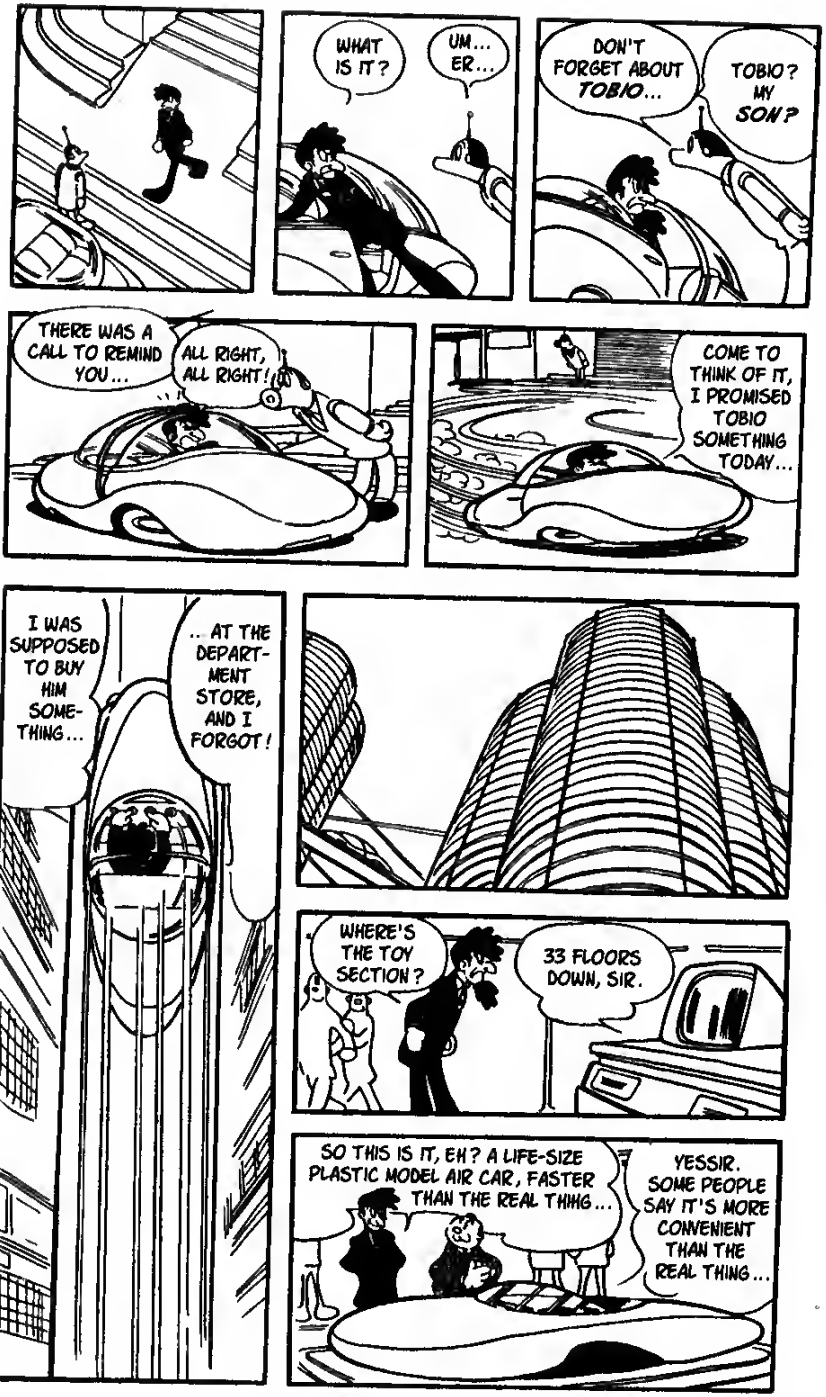

AS GOVERNMENT REPRESENTATIVES, DR. TENMA, WE WANT TO KNOW WHY YOU'RE PRODUCING ROBOTS...
IT'S CONTRARY TO THE WISHES OF THE GOVERN-MENT!
WHO GAVE YOU THE RIGHT TO DO THIS?



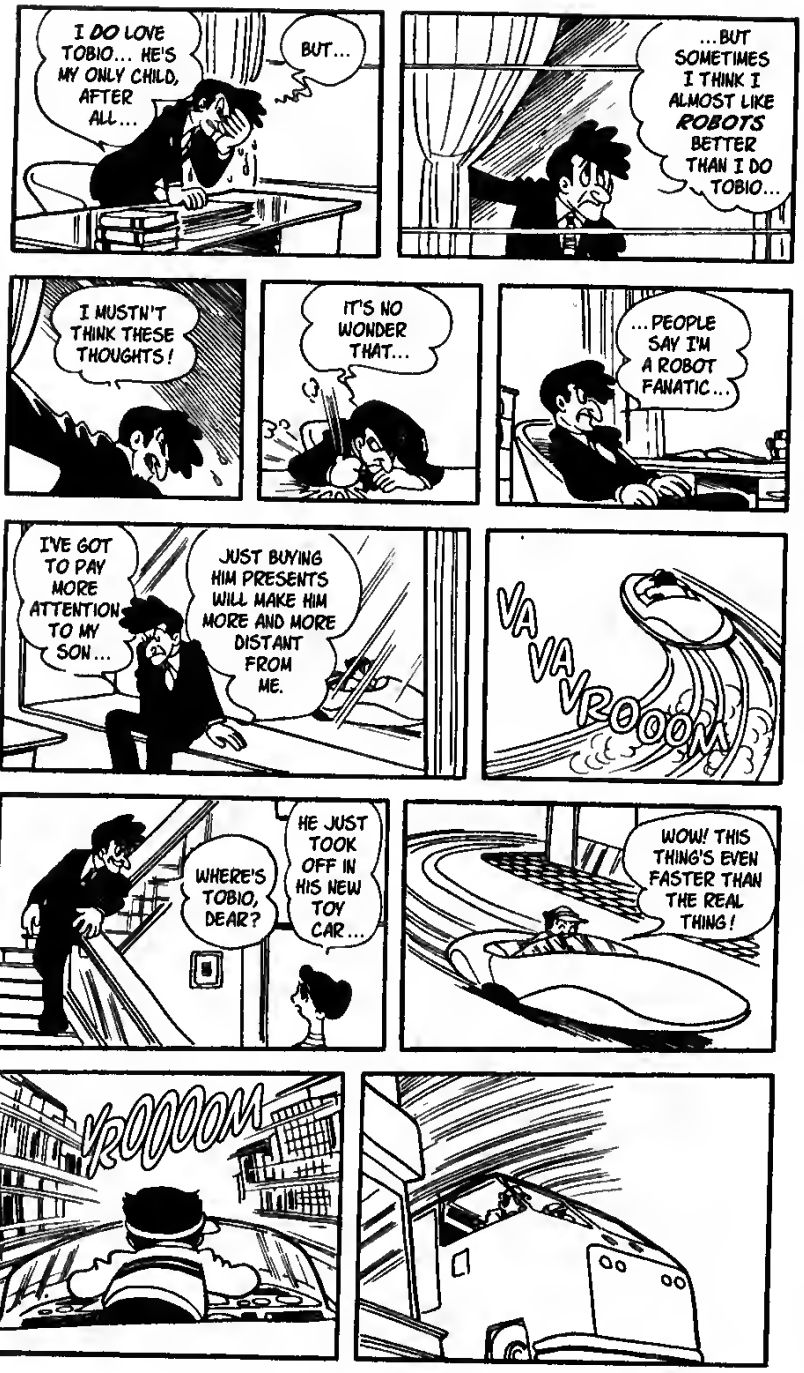


DR. TENMA: BORN INTO A LONG LINE OF NORSE RADISH FARMERS, IN THE PARTICULARLY UNLUCKY YEAR OF THE NORSE, IN GUNMA ("NORSE HERD") PREFECTURE. REAL NAME IS TARO UMA ("HORSE"). GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF NERIMA ("WALKING HORSE"), AND THOUGH A COMPLETE DARK HORSE, THROUGH AN AMAZING DEMONSTRATION OF INTELLECTUAL NORSEPOWER ROSE TO BE THE HEAD OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE -- IN AN AREA OF TOKYO KNOWN AS TAKADANOBABA, WHICH LOOSELY TRANSLATES INTO A "HIGH PASTURE FOR HORSES." AMONG THOSE WISHING TO UNSEAT HIM, HE IS KNOWN AS A REAL HORSE OF A DIFFERENT COLOR.




WHAT IS IT?
UM... ER...
DON'T FORGET ABOUT TOBIO...
TOBIO? MY SON?
THERE WAS A CALL TO REMIND YOU...
ALL RIGHT, ALL RIGHT!
COME TO THINK OF IT, I PROMISED TOBIO SOMETHING TODAY...
I WAS SUPPOSED TO BUY HIM SOME-THING...
.. AT THE DEPART-MENT STORE, AND I FORGOT!
WHERE'S THE TOY SECTION?
33 FLOORS DOWN, SIR.
SO THIS IS IT, EH? A LIFE-SIZE PLASTIC MODEL AIR CAR, FASTER THAN THE REAL THING...
YESSIR. SOME PEOPLE SAY IT'S MORE CONVENIENT THAN THE REAL THING...

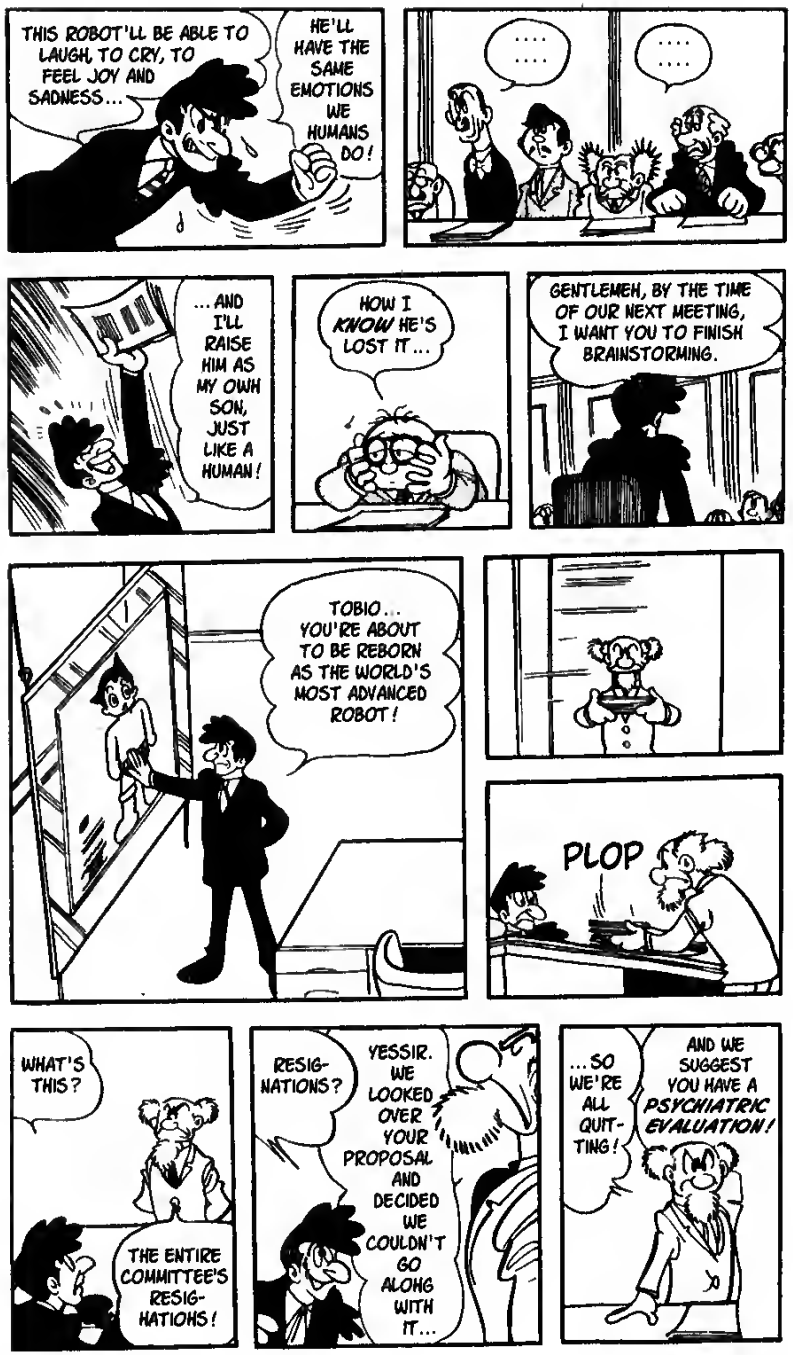
YOO HOO! I'M HOME!
AIRCAR
HI, PAPA! WHAT'D YOU BRING ME?!
TAKE A LOOK OUTSIDE, TOBIO!
WOW, DAD! THIS IS COOL! THANKS SO MUCH!
CAN I PUT IT TOGETHER RIGHT NOW?
GO RIGHT AHEAD, SON...
MODEL KITS THESE DAYS SURE ARE WELL MADE...
RUNS BETTER THAN THE REAL THING, AND YOU CAN RIDE IN IT, TOO!
COULDN'T YOU CUT DOWN ON WORK, DEAR, AND SPEND SOME MORE TIME WITH TOBIO?
WELL, I DO BRING HIM PRESENTS...
BUT HE'S BEEN AWFULLY LONELY...
HE HARDLY EVER SEES YOUR FACE ANYMORE...
MAYBE I COULD MAKE A ROBOT FOR HIM WITH MY FACE...


I DO LOVE TOBIO... HE'S MY ONLY CHILD, AFTER ALL...
BUT...
...BUT SOMETIMES I THINK I ALMOST LIKE ROBOTS BETTER THAN I DO TOBIO...
I MUSTN'T THINK THESE THOUGHTS!
IT'S NO WONDER THAT...
...PEOPLE SAY I'M A ROBOT FANATIC...
I'VE GOT TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO MY SON...
JUST BUYING HIM PRESENTS WILL MAKE HIM MORE AND MORE DISTANT FROM ME.
VA VA VROOOM
WHERE'S TOBIO, DEAR?
HE JUST TOOK OFF IN HIS NEW TOY CAR...
WOW! THIS THING'S EVEN FASTER THAN THE REAL THING!
VROOOOM

HONK
YIKES!
SMASH
WHEEE WHEEEEEEE
WHAT?! WHAT DID YOU SAY?!
WHAT HAPPENED, DEAR?
TOBIO... TOBIO'S ...
HE WHAT?!!
WHEEEEEE WHEEEE
TOBIO !!
IT CAN'T BE!!

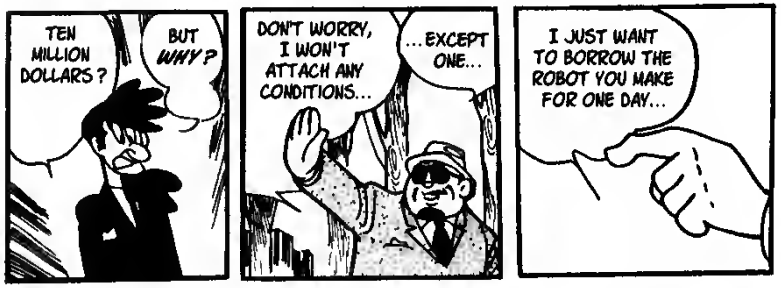
TOBIO!! MY DEAR, DEAR TOBIO! MY ONLY SON!
IF TOBIO'D BEEN A ROBOT...
...HE WOULDN'T NAVE NAD AN ACCIDENT!
HE WOULD'VE BEEN STRONG AND POWER-FUL...
THAT'S THE WAY MY SON SHOULD BE...
I KNOW! I'LL MOBILIZE THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE TO MAKE A ROBOT!
I'LL NAVE THEM MAKE ME A NEW SON!!
THAT'S IT! I'LL USE STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGY...
... AND CREATE A WORK OF ART-- THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED ROBOT!
TOBIO! I'LL BRING YOU BACK TO LIFE, WITN A ROBOT BODY!
THIS IS BRILLIANT! GWAHAH HAH HAH!

MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, MAIN BUILDING.
... AS JUST OUTLINED, WE'LL MARSHALL ALL THE MINISTRY'S RESOURCES...
...AND CREATE THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED ROBOT!
I'VE PUT FORTH THIS PROPOSAL TO CREATE A TRUE WORK OF ART, A SHOWCASE OF OUR NATION'S ROBOT TECHNOLOGY!
I WANT EACH SECTION TO SELECT ITS BEST STAFF MEMBERS AND COMMENCE WORK IMMEDIATELY...
B-BUT DO WE NAVE THE BUDGET FOR TNIS?
HERE'S THE DESIGN I'VE PUT TOGETHER!
NOW, THIS ROBOT LOOKS LIKE A YOUNG BOY, BUT HE HAS 100,000 HORSEPOWER AND SEVEN SECRET POWERS!
IMPOS-SIBLE!
NO WAY WE CAN MAKE TNAT!
NAS THE MINISTER LOST HIS MARBLES?


THIS ROBOT'LL BE ABLE TO LAUGH, TO CRY, TO FEEL JOY AND SADNESS...
HE'LL HAVE THE SAME EMOTIONS WE HUMANS DO!
....
....
...AND I'LL RAISE HIM AS MY OWN SON, JUST LIKE A HUMAN!
HOW I KNOW HE'S LOST IT...
GENTLEMEN, BY THE TIME OF OUR NEXT MEETING, I WANT YOU TO FINISH BRAINSTORMING.
TOBIO... YOU'RE ABOUT TO BE REBORN AS THE WORLD'S MOST ADVANCED ROBOT!
PLOP
WHAT'S THIS?
THE ENTIRE COMMITTEE'S RESIG-NATIONS!
RESIG-NATIONS?
YESSIR. WE LOOKED OVER YOUR PROPOSAL AND DECIDED WE COULDN'T GO ALONG WITH IT...
...SO WE'RE ALL QUIT-TING!
AND WE SUGGEST YOU HAVE A PSYCHIATRIC EVALUATION!

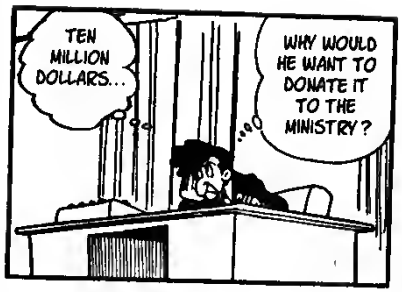
RRR... GRR...
OPEN UP. IT'S ME, THE MINISTER!
WHAT'S GOING ON, USHI-GOME?
...THE ENTIRE COMMITTEE DECIDED TO RESIGN!
WHY WON'T THEY GO ALONG WITH MY PLAN?
SHOULD BE OBVIOUS, SIR...
WHAT GOOD'S A ROBOT LIKE THAT? IT'S JUST FOR YOUR OWN SELF-SATISFACTION!
B... BUT...
NO ONE'S GOING TO GO ALONG WITH YOU. IT'S TOO FAR-FETCHED, AND THERE'S NO BUDGET FOR IT!
I DON'T BELIEVE IT!
THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE WON'T DO A ROBOT RESEARCH PROJECT!
NO BUDGET?! HMPH!
THE MINISTRY OF DEFENSE GETS TONS OF MONEY!
THIS IS THE WAY JAPAN'S ALWAYS BEEN...
OUT FOR A WALK, SIR?
YOU SEEM TROUBLED BY SOMETHING...
IF IT'S MONEY YOU NEED, ALLOW ME TO HELP...
WHAT?

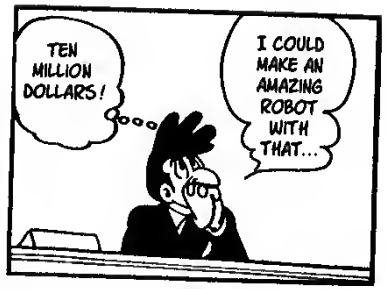
TABA KOH...
I'VE HEARD OF YOU...
I'VE GOT A LITTLE TRADING BUSINESS IN L.A...
BUT I'D LIKE TO MAKE A LITTLE DONATION TO THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE...
TO THE TUNE OF TEN MILLION DOLLARS!

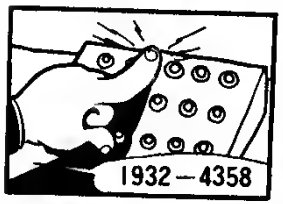

TEN MILLION DOLLARS?
BUT WHY?
DON'T WORRY, I WON'T ATTACH ANY CONDITIONS...
...EXCEPT ONE...
I JUST WANT TO BORROW THE ROBOT YOU MAKE FOR ONE DAY...

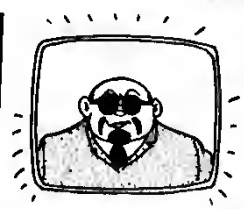
WELL... THAT'S NOT POSSIBLE...
MINISTRY OF SCIENCE SECRETS ARE INVOLVED!
BUT IT'S ONLY ONE DAY! ONE DAY!
THE ANSWER IS NO.
IDIOT! YOU'RE PASSING UP A GREAT OPPORTUNITY!
TEN MILLION DOLLARS!!

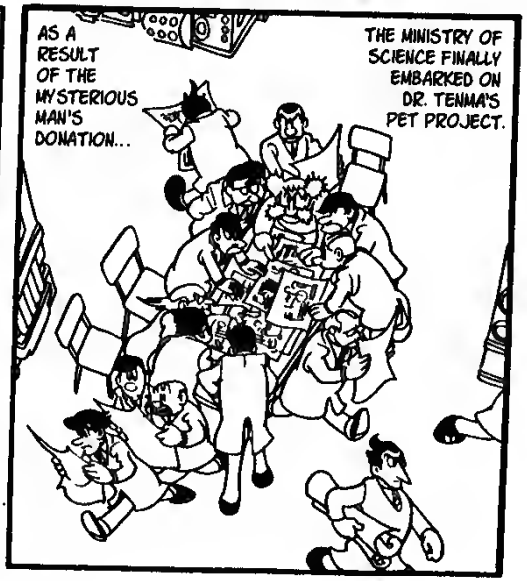
*FIRST-GENERATION JAPANESE-AMERICAN



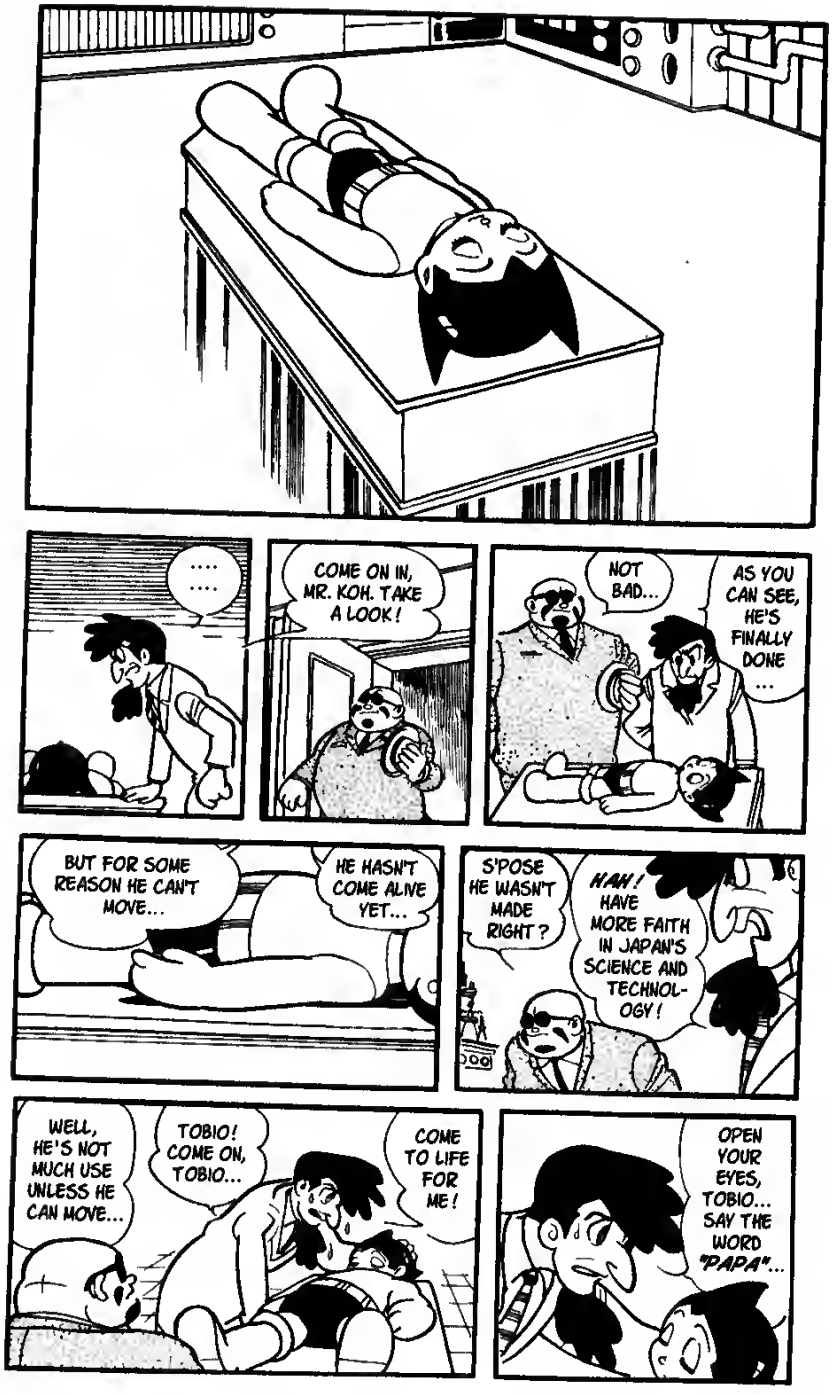








THE NEW ROBOT WAS GIVEN THE NAME "TOBIO."
...AND WORK ON HIM PROCEEDED SMOOTHLY...
ALMOST DONE NOW...
CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HIM MOVE!
HERE'S THE HEAD, SIR.
BACK TO THE DRAWING BOARD!
THAT'S NOT THE FACE I'VE GOT IN MIND!
TWO YEARS PASSED...
HE'S 99 PERCENT DONE! ONLY ONE PERCENT LEFT!
WHAT'S LEFT?
HE HASN'T MOVED YET...

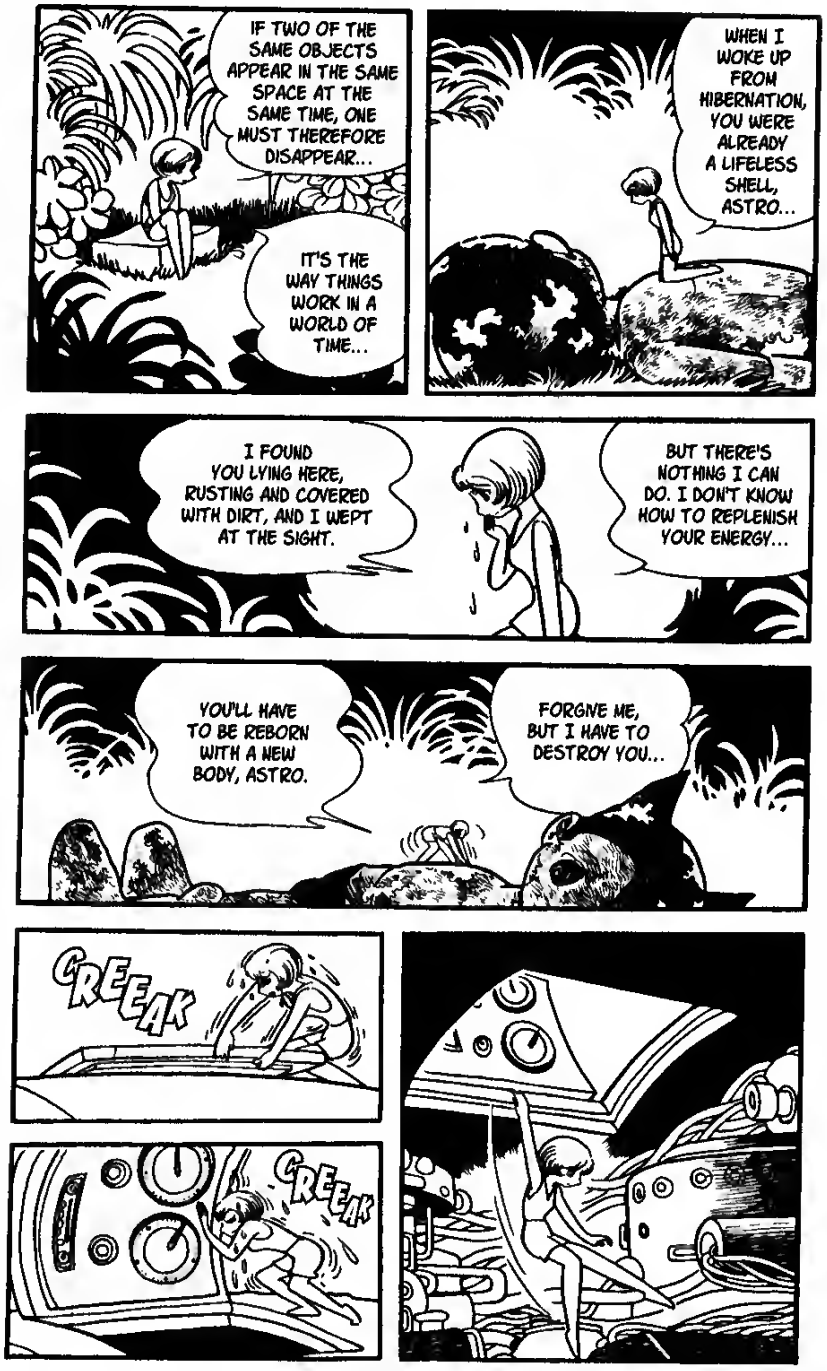

....
....
COME ON IN, MR. KOH. TAKE A LOOK!
NOT BAD...
AS YOU CAN SEE, HE'S FINALLY DONE ...
BUT FOR SOME REASON HE CAN'T MOVE...
HE HASN'T COME ALIVE YET...
S'POSE HE WASN'T MADE RIGHT?
HAH! HAVE MORE FAITH IN JAPAN'S SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY!
WELL, HE'S NOT MUCH USE UNLESS HE CAN MOVE...
TOBIO! COME ON, TOBIO...
COME TO LIFE FOR ME!
OPEN YOUR EYES, TOBIO... SAY THE WORD "PAPA"...

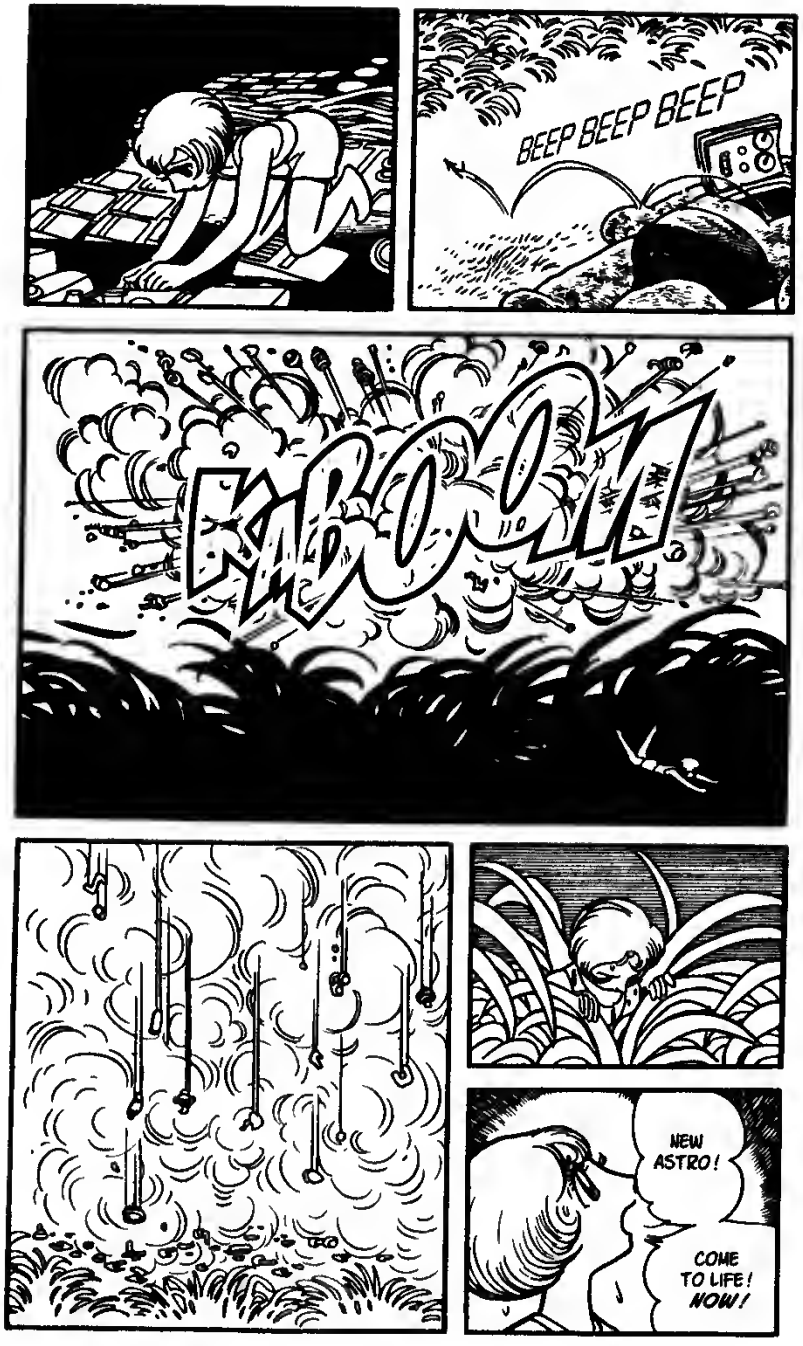
YOU'RE A PART OF ME, TOBIO...
YOU'RE MY BODY AND SOUL... MY SON!
LET'S NOT GET TOO SENTIMENTAL, DR. TENMA.
IF YOU CAN'T MAKE HIM, JUST LET ME KNOW. I CAN'T AFFORD TO WAIT ANOTHER TWO YEARS.
I DIDN'T SAY I COULDN'T MAKE HIM!
GET OUT OF HERE!
I'M NOT LEAVING THIS ROOM UNTIL I SUCCEED!
IF I HAVE TO, I'LL LIVE OFF CUP NOODLES IN HERE!
TRESPASSING FORBIDDEN. NATURE PRESERVE.
CHIRP
CHIRP
BUZZ
POP

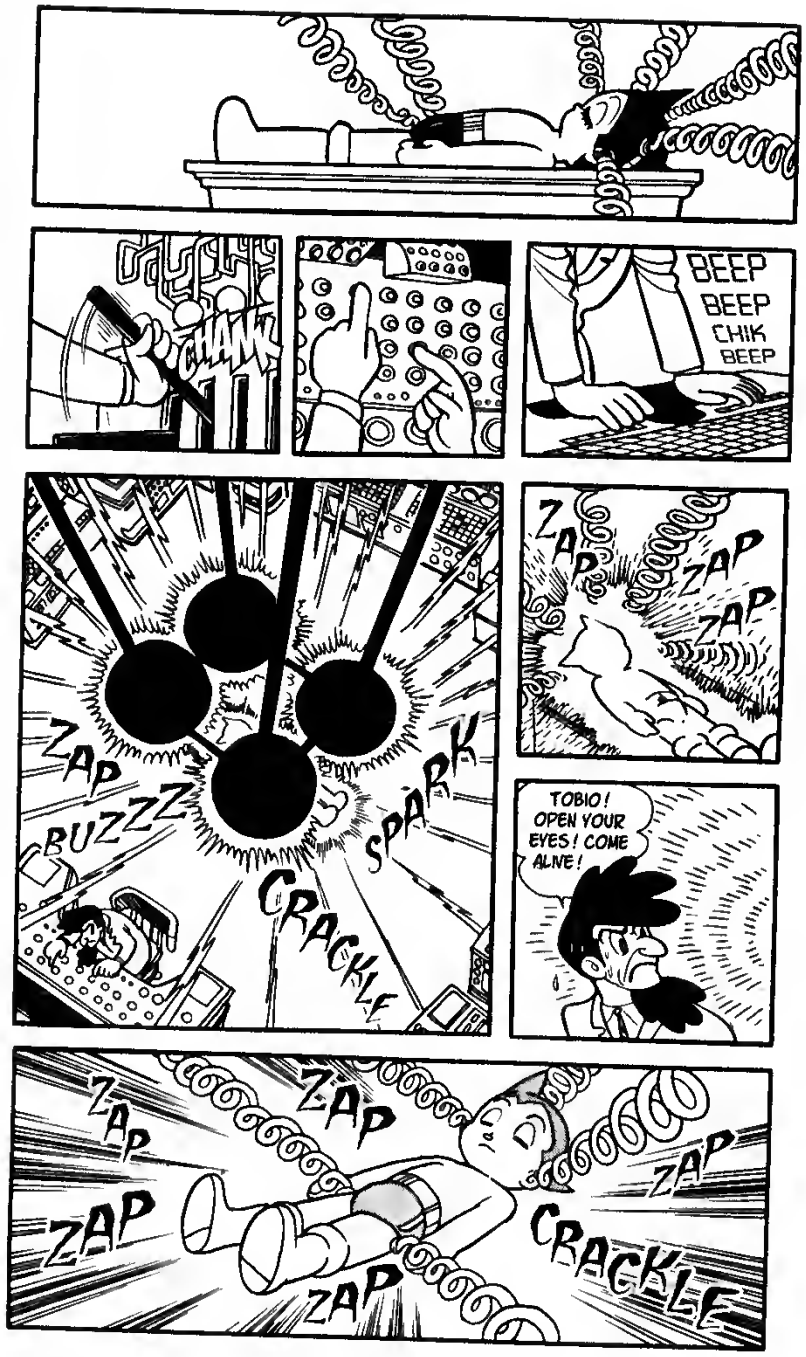
I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT I'M HAVING TROUBLE SLEEPING TONIGHT...
LOOK! A HIKER'S THROWN AWAY A NEWS-PAPER HE WAS READING!
I WONDER WHAT'S GOING ON IN THE CITY...
ROBO
SAYS "MINISTRY OF SCIENCE MAKING NEW TYPE OF ROBOT"
BUT THIS IS ASTRO!
"THE MINISTRY IS KEEPING THE DESIGN OF THE NEW ROBOT UNDER WRAPS"
"WHILE MADE ACCORDING TO SPECIFICATIONS, IT DOES NOT YET APPEAR TO WORK..."
"IT IS APPAR-ENTLY NOT YET FINAL-IZED..."
"... AND WON'T MOVE UNTIL THE FAULTY CIRCUITS ARE REPAIRED."
IT REALLY IS ASTRO...
SPRONG
THIS IS A BIG PROB-LEM!

I WAS AFRAID OF THIS...
...AND IT'S FINALLY HAPPENED!
ASTRO... THE TIME HAS FINALLY COME...
YOU MUST DISAPPEAR COMPLETELY!
THERE ARE TWO OF YOU NOW! ONE HERE AND ONE AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE!
WE'VE GOT A TIME PARADOX!

TIME PARADOX:
IF SOMEONE TRAVELS BACK IN TIME, THEY ENCOUNTER THEMSELVES, AND TWO OF THEM EXIST SIMULTANEOUSLY. IF THE TIME TRAVELER KILLS THE OTHER PERSON, THEY WOULD IN EFFECT ALSO BE KILLING THEMSELF.

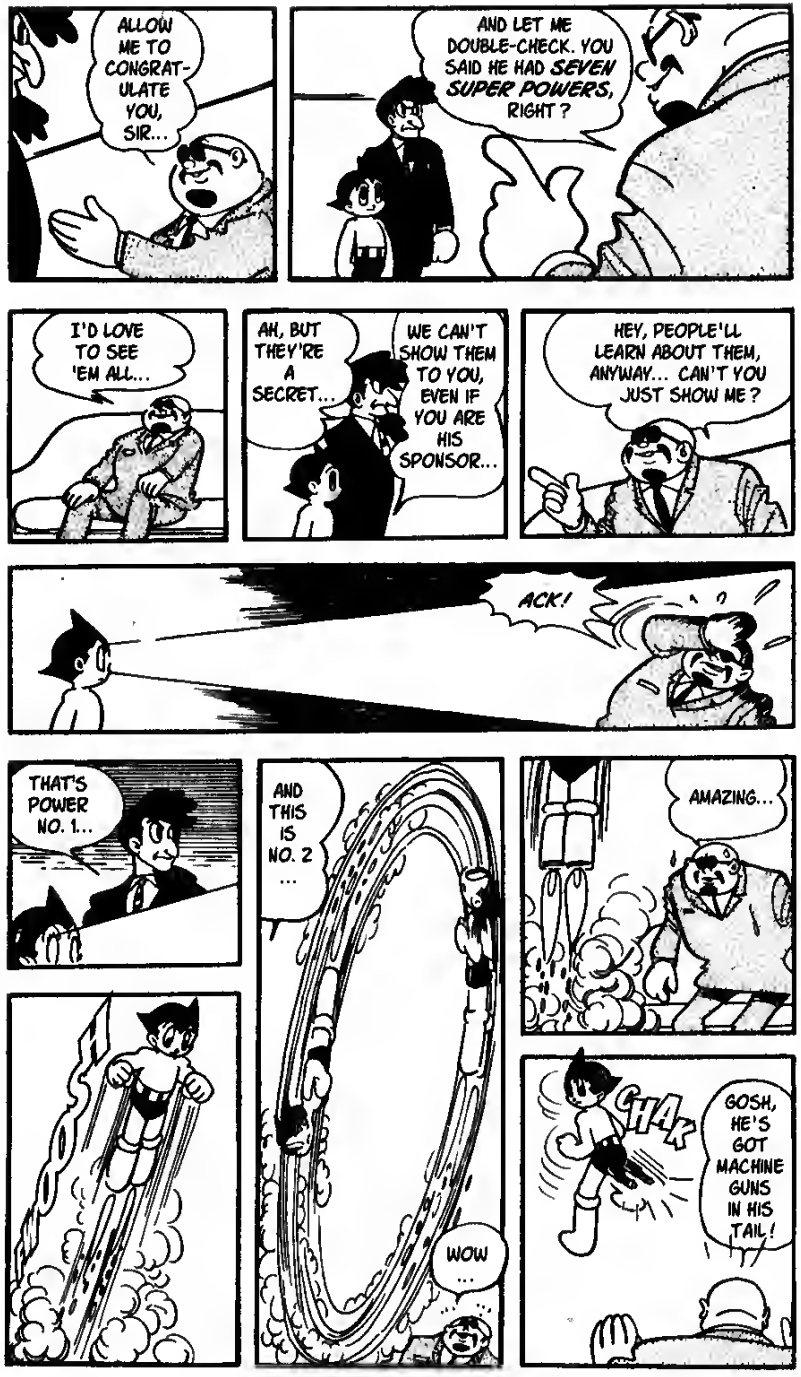

IF TWO OF THE SAME OBJECTS APPEAR IN THE SAME SPACE AT THE SAME TIME, ONE MUST THEREFORE DISAPPEAR...
IT'S THE WAY THINGS WORK IN A WORLD OF TIME...
WHEN I WOKE UP FROM HIBERNATION, YOU WERE ALREADY A LIFELESS SHELL, ASTRO...
I FOUND YOU LYING HERE, RUSTING AND COVERED WITH DIRT, AND I WEPT AT THE SIGHT.
BUT THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO. I DON'T KNOW HOW TO REPLENISH YOUR ENERGY...
YOU'LL HAVE TO BE REBORN WITH A NEW BODY, ASTRO.
FORGIVE ME, BUT I HAVE TO DESTROY YOU...
CREEAK
CREEAK


BEEP BEEP BEEP
KABOOM
NEW ASTRO!
COME TO LIFE! NOW!

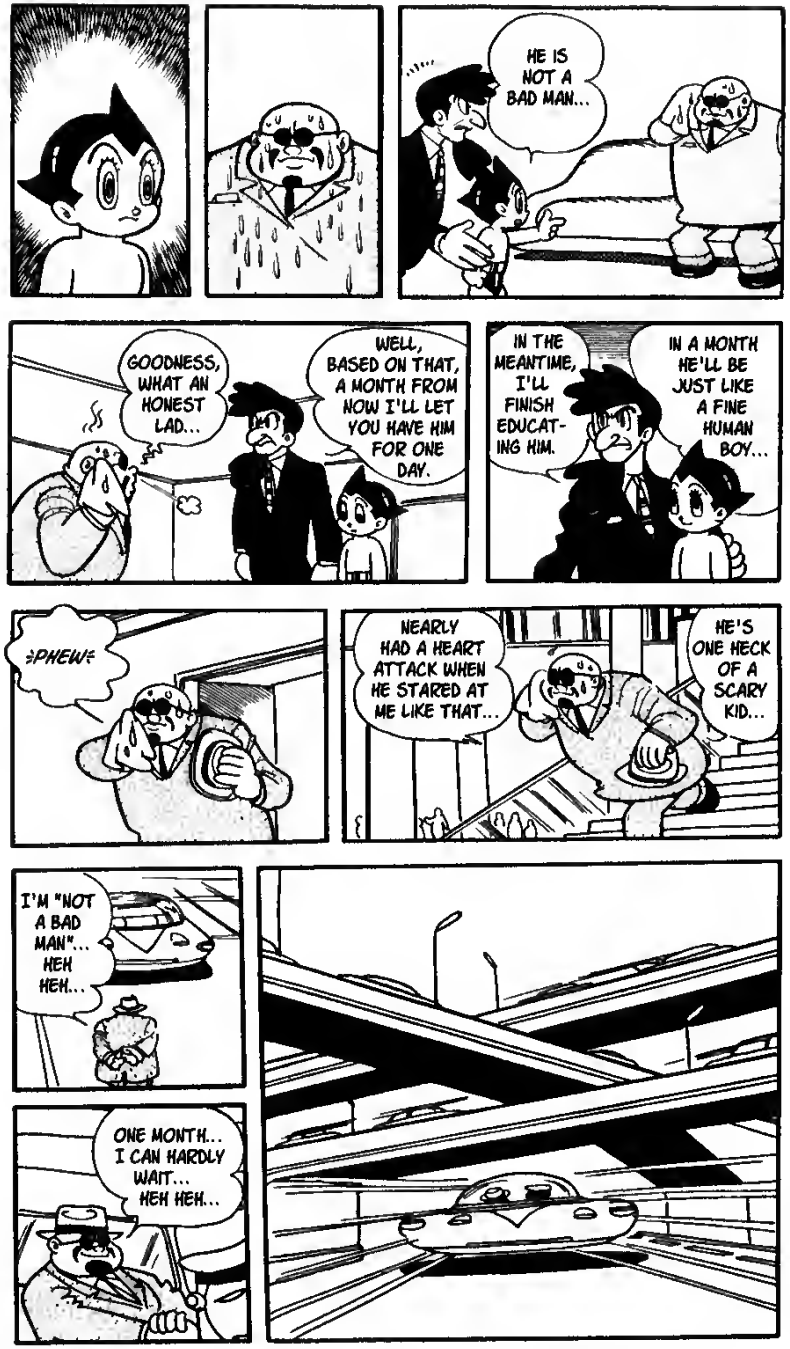

CHANK
BEEP BEEP CHIK BEEP
ZAP ZAP ZAP
ZAP BUZZZ SPARK CRACKLE
TOBIO! OPEN YOUR EYES! COME ALIVE!
ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP ZAP CRACKLE

HMMMM
TOBIO SUDDENLY SOUNDS BETTER!
MAYBE HE'LL FINALLY WORK NOW!
BEEEP
HE'S WAKING UP!
PSHHH
TOBIO!
TOBIO! CAN YOU SEE ME? IT'S YOUR PAPA! COME TO PAPA, BOY...
CAN YOU SMILE FOR ME?
BEAM
NOW CALL ME "PAPA"...
PA... PA...
I DID IT! MY SON'S FINALLY BEEN REBORN!!
HEY, EVERYBODY, COME LOOK!!

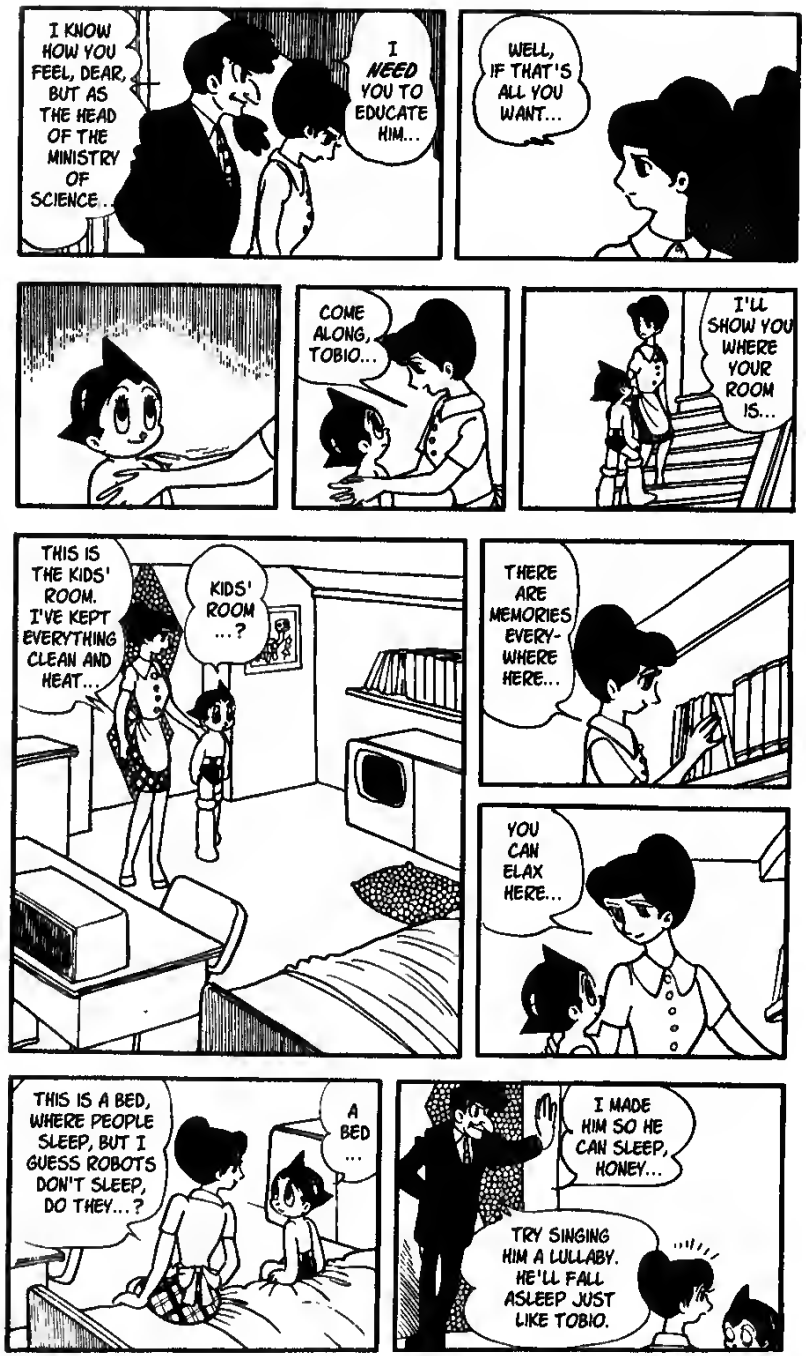
UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF DR. TENMA, AFTER TWO YEARS OF HARD WORK, THE SCIENTISTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PRECISION MACHINERY AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE HAVE FINALLY COMPLETED TOBIO, AN ULTRA-ADVANCED ROBOT.
WOW... THEY REALLY MADE SOMETHING AMAZING!
YEAH, LOOKS GOOD, BUT MAYBE IT'S JUST AN EMPTY SHELL...
YO, WHAT DO YOU THINK?
I DON'T KNOW...
NO MATTER HOW ADVANCED A ROBOT THEY CREATE, OUR LIVES WON'T CHANGE...
WHY SHOULD THEY?
YOU ROBOTS'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO LIVE LIKE HUMANS...
PTOOEY
MR. TABA KOH... THIS IS THE COMPLETED TOBIO.
AMAZING...
AS PROMISED, YOU'LL LOAN HIM TO ME FOR A DAY, OF COURSE... NEH NEH NEH.


ALLOW ME TO CONGRAT-ULATE YOU, SIR...
AND LET ME DOUBLE-CHECK. YOU SAID HE HAD SEVEN SUPER POWERS, RIGHT?
I'D LOVE TO SEE 'EM ALL...
AH, BUT THEY'RE A SECRET...
WE CAN'T SHOW THEM TO YOU, EVEN IF YOU ARE HIS SPONSOR...
HEY, PEOPLE'LL LEARN ABOUT THEM, ANYWAY... CAN'T YOU JUST SHOW ME?
ACK!
THAT'S POWER NO. 1...
AND THIS IS NO. 2 ...
WOW ...
AMAZING...
GIAK
GOSH, HE'S GOT MACHINE GUNS IN HIS TAIL!

RATATATAT
STOP, TOBIO! DON'T BE RUDE!
WHA?
THERE'RE LOTS OF THINGS HE DOESN'T UNDERSTAND YET. HE'S LIKE A NEWBORN BABY...
GOOD BOY! HERE, LEMME GIVE YOU A BIG HUG...
HUG?
YEAH, I'LL TAKE YOU IN MY ARMS...
LIKE THIS?
HE'S EVEN MORE AMAZING THAN I'D HEARD, DR. TENMA.
I'LL COME BACK NEXT MONTH TO BORROW HIM.
NOW, JUST A MINUTE!
YOU HAVEN'T TOLD ME WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO USE HIM FOR!
TOBIO CAN ALSO TELL IF PEOPLE ARE GOOD OR NOT...
LOOK AT THIS MAN, TOBIO, TELL ME WHAT YOU DETECT...

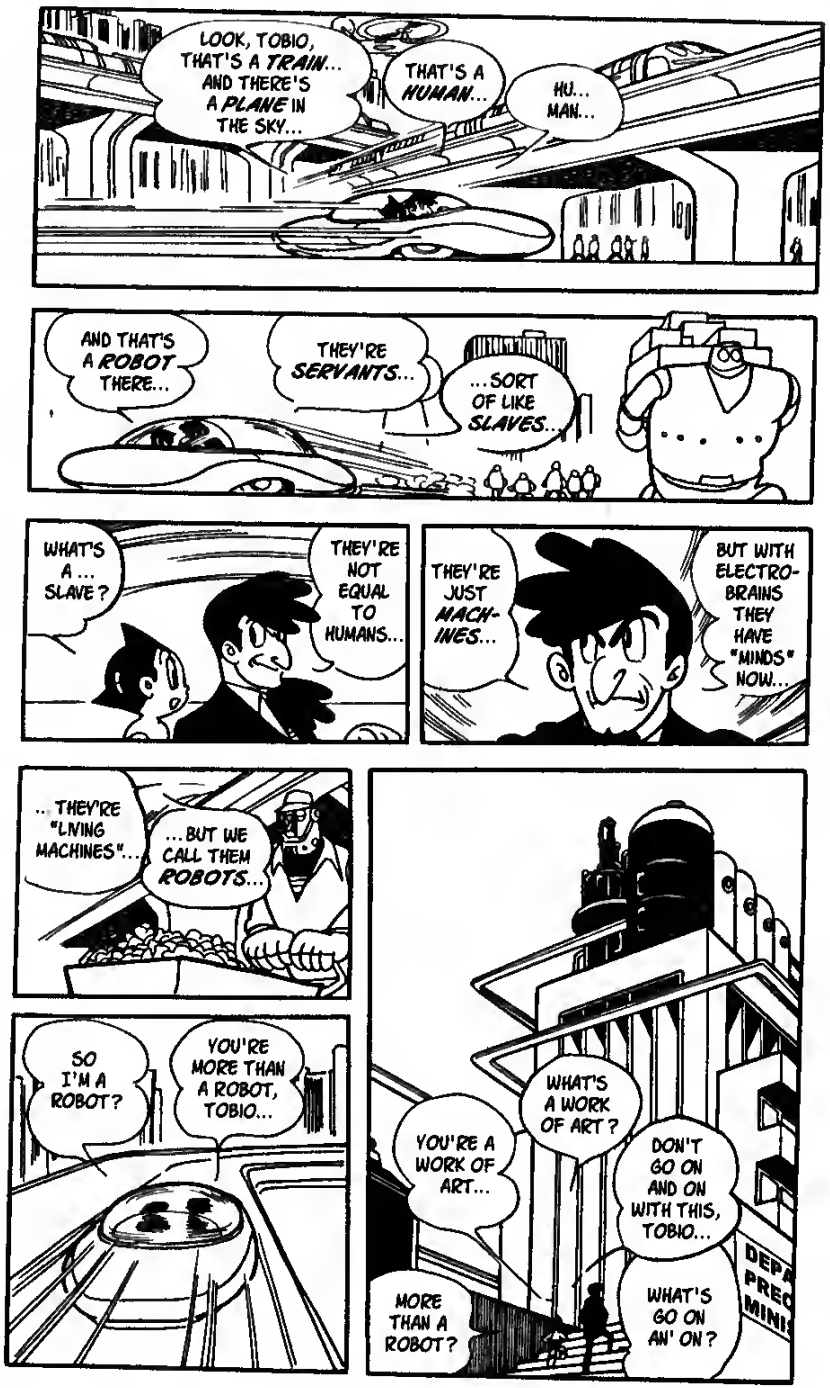

HE IS NOT A BAD MAN...
GOODNESS, WHAT AN HONEST LAD...
WELL, BASED ON THAT, A MONTH FROM NOW I'LL LET YOU HAVE HIM FOR ONE DAY.
IN THE MEANTIME, I'LL FINISH EDUCATING HIM.
IN A MONTH HE'LL BE JUST LIKE A FINE HUMAN BOY...
=PHEW=
NEARLY HAD A HEART ATTACK WHEN HE STARED AT ME LIKE THAT...
HE'S ONE HECK OF A SCARY KID...
I'M "NOT A BAD MAN"... HEH HEH...
ONE MONTH... I CAN HARDLY WAIT... HEH HEH...

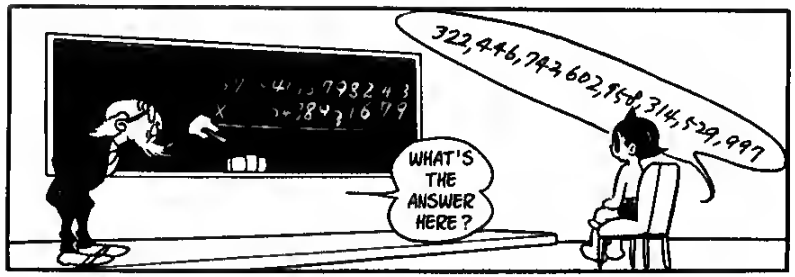
I'M HOME, HONEY...
HERE'S OUR NEW SON...
WHAT DO YOU CALL YOURSELF?
TOBIO.
GOODNESS! YOU SOUND JUST LIKE HIM, TOO!
I WANT US TO RAISE HIM, DEAR.
...JUST LIKE TOBIO.
IT'S THE BEST WAY TO HONOR OUR DEAD SON...
HE'S A ROBOT, DEAR!
HE'S AN ARTIFICIAL CREATION!
YOU EXPECT ME TO LOVE HIM THE WAY I DID OUR REAL SON?
HONEY, I MADE HIM TO BE EXACTLY THE SAME...
"JUST LIKE TOBIO"?! BUT HIS BODY'S COLD AS ICE!
LOOK AT HIS EYES... LOOK HOW CLEAR THEY ARE...
HE MAY LOOK LIKE A ROBOT, BUT HE'S GOT THE SOUL OF A HUMAN...
B... BUT HE'S ARTIFICIAL...

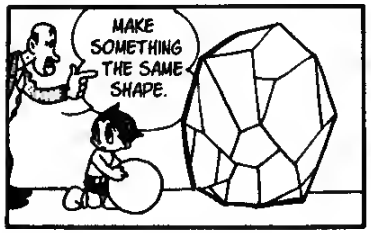

I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL, DEAR, BUT AS THE HEAD OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE..
I NEED YOU TO EDUCATE HIM...
WELL, IF THAT'S ALL YOU WANT...
COME ALONG, TOBIO...
I'LL SHOW YOU WHERE YOUR ROOM IS...
THIS IS THE KIDS' ROOM. I'VE KEPT EVERYTHING CLEAN AND NEAT...
KIDS' ROOM ...?
THERE ARE MEMORIES EVERY-WHERE HERE...
YOU CAN ELAX HERE...
THIS IS A BED, WHERE PEOPLE SLEEP, BUT I GUESS ROBOTS DON'T SLEEP, DO THEY...?
A BED ...
I MADE HIM SO HE CAN SLEEP, HONEY...
TRY SINGING HIM A LULLABY. HE'LL FALL ASLEEP JUST LIKE TOBIO.

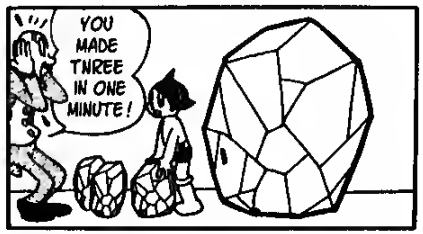
RING RING RING
SMASH!
UH OH...
RIP
UH OH...
GOOD EVENING, MOTHER...
NO, TOBIO, IT'S "GOOD MORNING" NOW!
BUT WHY'D YOU TEAR THE CURTAIN?
IT'S 'CUZ HE'S GOT 100,000 HORSE-POWER, THAT'S WHY.
HE'S BRAND NEW AND HASN'T FIGURED OUT HOW TO CONTROL HIS STRENGTH YET...
STOP, TOBIO!! YOU DON'T EAT THE TOOTH-BRUSH!
CHOMP CHOMP

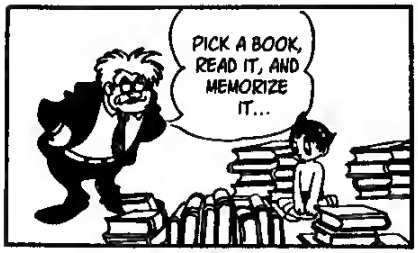
CAN HE EAT, DEAR?
OF COURSE. SHOW HER, TOBIO!
CONGRAT-ULATIONS!
NO, TOBIO. IT'S "BLESS THIS FOOD!"
BLESS THIS FOOD...
YOU'RE REALLY EATING. IS IT GOOD?
HOW ARE MY HAM AND EGGS?
PROTEIN, 90; FAT, 65; CARBOHYDRATES, 28; WATER, 95; SODIUM NITRATE, O.S...
WHEN YOU FINISH, YOU GO TO THE BATH-ROOM..
THEN WE'LL GO TO THE MINISTRY.
ROBOTS GO TO THE BATH-ROOM?
SURE, BUT NOT LIKE HUMANS.
HE HAS TO GET RID OF THE PREVIOUS DAY'S URANIUM COMP-OUNDS...
URANIUM? YOU MEAN HE'S RADIO-ACTIVE?
DON'T WORRY... IT'S NOT LIKE ATOMIC POWERED SHIPS IN THE OLD DAYS. HE DOESN'T PRODUCE ANYTHING RADIOACTIVE...
SEE YOU LATER, MAMA...
JUST TO BE SURE..
I'D BETTER DO A DAILY GEIGER COUNTER CHECK...

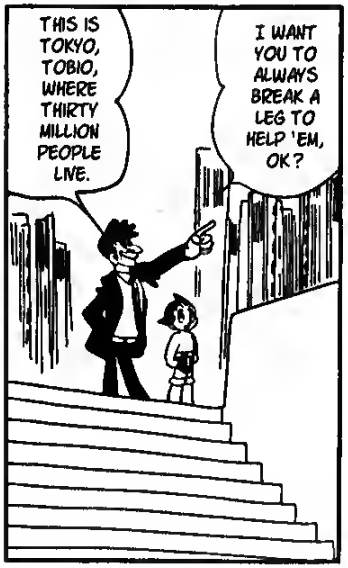

LOOK, TOBIO, THAT'S A TRAIN... AND THERE'S A PLANE IN THE SKY...
THAT'S A HUMAN...
HU... MAN...
AND THAT'S A ROBOT THERE...
THEY'RE SERVANTS...
...SORT OF LIKE SLAVES...
WHAT'S A ... SLAVE?
THEY'RE NOT EQUAL TO HUMANS...
THEY'RE JUST MACH-INES...
BUT WITH ELECTRO-BRAINS THEY HAVE "MINDS" NOW...
.. THEY'RE "LIVING MACHINES"...
...BUT WE CALL THEM ROBOTS...
SO I'M A ROBOT?
YOU'RE MORE THAN A ROBOT, TOBIO...
WHAT'S A WORK OF ART?
YOU'RE A WORK OF ART...
DON'T GO ON AND ON WITH THIS, TOBIO...
MORE THAN A ROBOT?
WHAT'S GO ON AN' ON?
DEPA PREC MINI

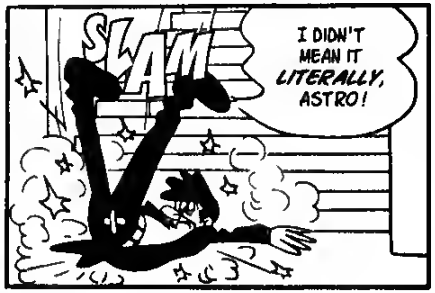












AT THE DEPARTMENT STORE, DR. TENMA ANNOUNCED, "YOU'LL NEED SOME CLOTHES TO WEAR, TOBIO, SO TRY THESE ON."

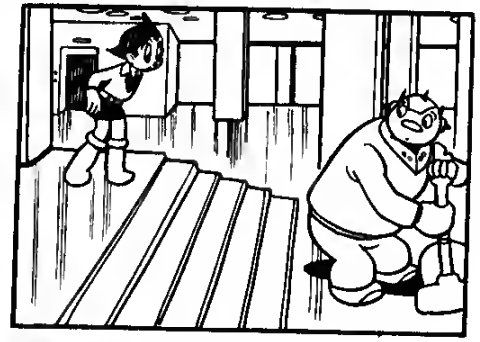
"TNIS YOUR BOY, SIR?" THE SHOCKED CLERK ASKED. "IF HE'S A ROBOT, I RECOMMEND CLOTHES MADE OF SPECIAL SYNTHETIC RESIN..."

"HE'S *NOT* A ROBOT. HE'S MY REAL SON, SO REGULAR CLOTHES'LL DO JUST FINE, TNANK YOU."

THE CLERK NODDED IN UNDERSTANDING. DR. TENMA'S FACE BRIGHTENED IN HAPPINESS WHEN HE SAW HOW WELL THE CLOTHES ACTUALLY FIT, BUT THEN THEY RIPPED.

"SEE?" THE CLERK SAID. "I TOLD YOU HUMAN CLOTHES DON'T WORK ON THE RIGID SKINS OF ROBOTS..."

WHILE WALKING DOWN THE HALLWAY, ASTRO CAME ACROSS A JANITOR ROBOT. IT JUMPED UP AND CAME TO ATTENTION WHEN IT SAW NIM.



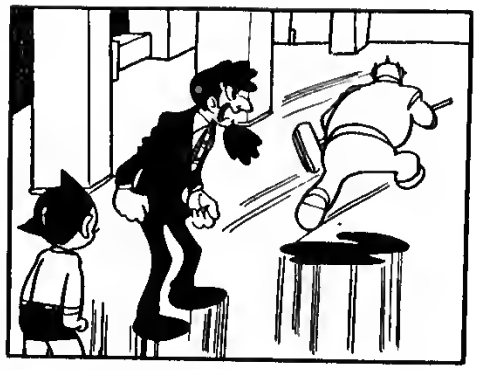
"WHY'RE YOU SO SURPRISED BY ME?" ASTRO ASKED. "I'M A ROBOT, TOO. LET'S BE FRIENDS!"

BUT THE OTHER ROBOT STEPPED BACKWARD IN SHOCK...

"I CAN'T," THE OTHER ROBOT REPLIED. "WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO ASSOCIATE WITH THOSE OF A DIFFERENT CLASS."

"DIFFERENT CLASS?" ASTRO ASKED. "WHAT'S THAT MEAN? YOU MEAN WE CAN'T PLAY TOGETHER?"

"IT'S JUST THE WAY THINGS ARE," THE ROBOT REPLIED. "NOW PLEASE EXCUSE ME..."

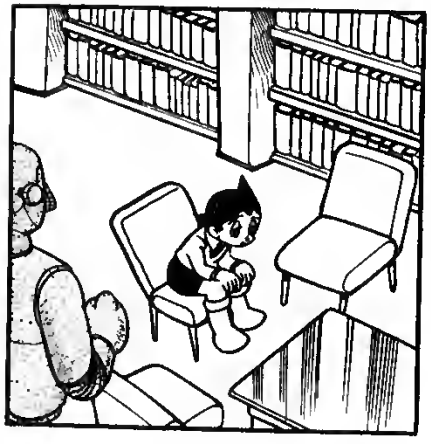


THEN DR. TENMA APPEARED AND YELLED AT THE ROBOT: "WHAT ARE YOU DILLY-DALLYING ABOUT? GET BACK TO WORK!"

ASTRO, SHOCKED, WATCHED IN PUZZLEMENT AS THE JANITOR ROBOT RAN BACK TO HIS WORKPLACE.

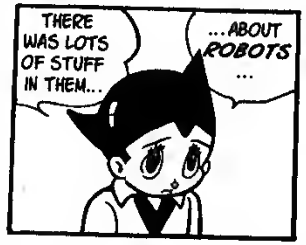
"DON'T TALK TO ROBOTS LIKE THAT, TOBIO. YOU'RE ONLY S'POSED TO TALK TO HUMANS."

"BUT WHY?" ASTRO ASKED.



"BECAUSE YOU'RE JUST LIKE A HUMAN, BUT THEY'RE NOT... HERE, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS LIBRARY. YOU CAN COME HERE WHENEVER YOU WANT AND READ AT YOUR LEISURE..."

ASTRO SAT DOWN IN A CHAIR AND BEGAN PONDERING WHETHER HE WAS REALLY A ROBOT OR A HUMAN. .



I KNOW ALL ABOUT YOU...
YOU DO? WHY?
BECAUSE I'M YOUR FRIEND...
IT'D TAKE A LONG TIME TO EXPLAIN... JUST TRUST ME...
CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT I'M SUPPOSED TO DO?
YOU'RE A ROBOT. BUT YOU'RE SPECIAL, BECAUSE YOU'RE BEING RAISED AS A HUMAN CHILD. YOU WILL BE A GO-BETWEEN, BETWEEN HUMANS AND ROBOTS. UNDERSTAND?
YOU MEAN I JUST STAND BETWEEN THEM?
THAT SOUNDS EASY.
YOU'LL EVENTUALLY UNDERSTAND. I'LL SEE YOU LATER..
WAIT, SCARA!
DON'T RUN AWAY, LITTLE BUG-PERSON! LET'S PLAY TOGETHER!
A LITTLE BUG-PERSON SAID SHE WANTED TO BE MY FRIEND, BUT SHE RAN AWAY...

IS THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT, TOBIO?
I WANT FRIENDS.
HAH HAH. EVERYONE AT THE MINISTRY'S YOUR FRIEND, TOBIO!
BUT I WANT SOME FRIENDS LIKE ME...
I'M SORRY, BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE...
THERE'S ONLY ONE OF YOU IN THE ENTIRE WORLD, TOBIO.
WHY CAN'T I PLAY WITH THE OTHER ROBOTS?
BECAUSE I SAY SO!
BECAUSE THEY'RE SLAVES!!
HERE COMES TOBIO!
DON'T TALK TO HIM, OR THEY'LL YELL AT US LATER...
GOSH... I FEEL SO LONELY. NOBODY'LL TALK TO ME.
I'D BE BETTER OFF IF I'D BEEN BORN A SLAVE...

THE TRAGEDY OF BAILEY

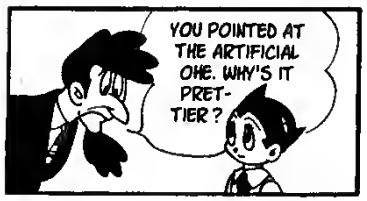
GOOD NIGHT, MAMA...
SEE? YOU'VE LEARNED HOW TO SAY IT NOW, TOBIO...
BUT WHY?
OH, AND BY THE WAY, TOBIO... DON'T EVER GO IN THE ROOM AT THE BACK...
...IT DOESN'T HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH YOU...
OKAY, MAMA...
THAT'S A GOOD BOY...
WOW. AN INSECT!
CREAK
WHERE'D YOU GO, LITTLE INSECT?
FLASH
WHAT'S THIS?

WHO'S THIS? HIS FACE LOOKS FAMILIAR...
LESSEE... THERE'S A NAME HERE...
TO... BI... O...
TOBIO?!
BUT THAT'S MY NAME!
MAMA, WAS A BOY NAMED TOBIO HERE BEFORE ME?
TOBIO! YOU WENT IN THAT ROOM, DIDN'T YOU!
YES...
THERE'S NO SENSE HIDING IT, I S'POSE, BUT I HOPED YOU WOULDN'T FIND OUT...
TOBIO WAS THE NAME OF MY REAL SON..
BUT HE DIED ...
YOU WERE MADE TO REPLACE HIM...
DID WE LOOK LIKE EACH OTHER?
VERY MUCH SO. YOU LOOK IDENTICAL ...
I DON'T BELIEVE YOU, MAMA. IN YOUR HEART YOU DON'T THINK I LOOK LIKE HIM AT ALL...
I CAN TELL...
BUT NOW I UNDERSTAND, AND TO MAKE YOU HAPPY...
...I'LL ACT AS MUCH LIKE HIM AS I CAN.
TOBIO, YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO THAT...
BUT I CAN... I'LL BECOME JUST LIKE HIM!
YOU SILLY BOY ...

TOBIO SPOKE SO FAST THAT SOMETIMES HE'D GET TONGUE-TIED. AND WHEN HE LISTENED TO ME, SOMETIMES HE'D TURN HIS EYES UP A BIT...
LIKE THIS?
WHEN HE WALKED HE TOOK BIG, FAST STRIDES. SOMETIMES HE'D TURN HIS HEAD FROM SIDE TO SIDE AND SHRUG HIS SHOULDERS A BIT...
JUST LIKE THAT...
WHEN HE CHANGED HIS CLOTHES ...
...HE WASN'T VERY CAREFUL.
HE HARDLY EVER FOLDED THEM...
...AND HE TENDED TO TOSS THEM ON THE FLOOR.
HE DIDN'T LIKE HIS BATH WATER VERY HOT...
...AND HE OFTEN SPLASHED AROUND, KICKING HIS LEGS.
SLAM
WHAT?! YOU LET TOBIO TAKE A BATH?!
WHAT'D YOU DO THAT FOR?!

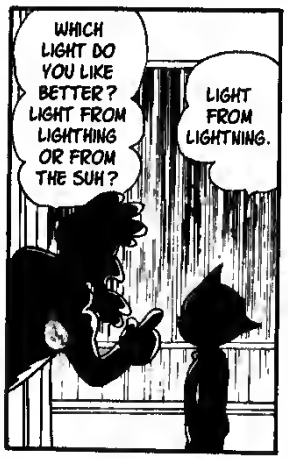
TOBIO'S NOT A HUMAN, DEAR! HE'S A ROBOT!
YOU'RE TO BLAME, TOO! HOW COME YOU'RE TRYING SO HARD TO ACT LIKE A HUMAN?
I...I WAS TRYING TO ACT LIKE THE TOBIO WHO DIED...
IT MAKES MAMA HAPPY ...
.....
.....
.....
IT'S TIME TO LET THE GHOST OF TOBIO GO, DEAR...
FROM NOW ON, THIS IS YOUR REAL SON.
IT'S TIME TO FORGET ABOUT THE ONE WHO DIED.
I'M GOING TO BURN ALL HIS PHOTOGRAPHS AND TOYS.
FORGET? HOW CAN I?
IN THE OLD DAYS SOME PEOPLE RAISED CHIMPANZEES OR LIONS LIKE THEIR OWN CHILDREN... NO REASON IT CAN'T BE DONE WITH A ROBOT...

OK, TOBIO... WHICH FLOWER'S PRETTIER?
THAT ONE ...


YOU POINTED AT THE ARTIFICIAL ONE. WHY'S IT PRET-TIER?

'CUZ IT LOOKS PRET-TIER...
BUT WHY DO YOU SEE ARTIFICIAL THINGS AS PRET-TIER?

NOW 'BOUT THIS?

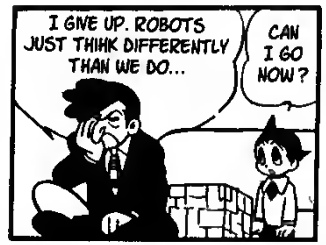

WHICH LIGHT DO YOU LIKE BETTER? LIGHT FROM LIGHTNING OR FROM THE SUN?
LIGHT FROM LIGHTNING.

ACK! YOU'VE GOT A TOTALLY DIFFERENT SENSIBILITY THAN HUMANS!
CAN'T YOU JUST PRETEND THAT THINGS HUMANS FIND PRETTY ARE PRETTY?

BUT I CAN'T TELL LIES...
I KNOW THAT ...
BUT HOW AM I GOING TO RAISE YOU AS A HUMAN?!

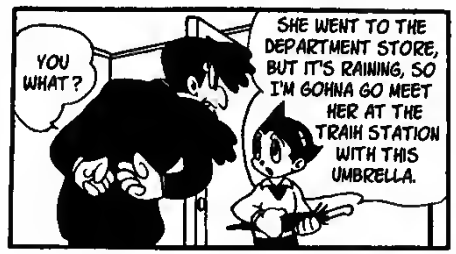
HOW, MAKE ME AN INTERESTING SHAPE WITH THESE BLOCKS...

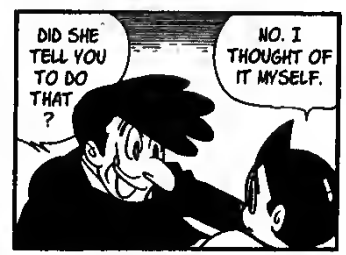
YEAH...
YOU THINK THIS IS INTEREST-ING?

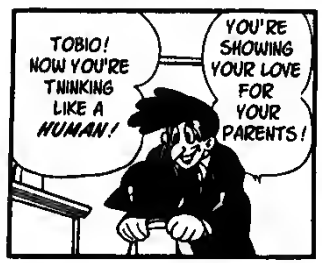

I GIVE UP. ROBOTS JUST THINK DIFFERENTLY THAN WE DO...
CAN I GO NOW?

SURE... GO PLAY IF YOU WANT...
OKAY ...

SO WHERE ARE YOU GOING?
I'M GONNA GO MEET MAMA.

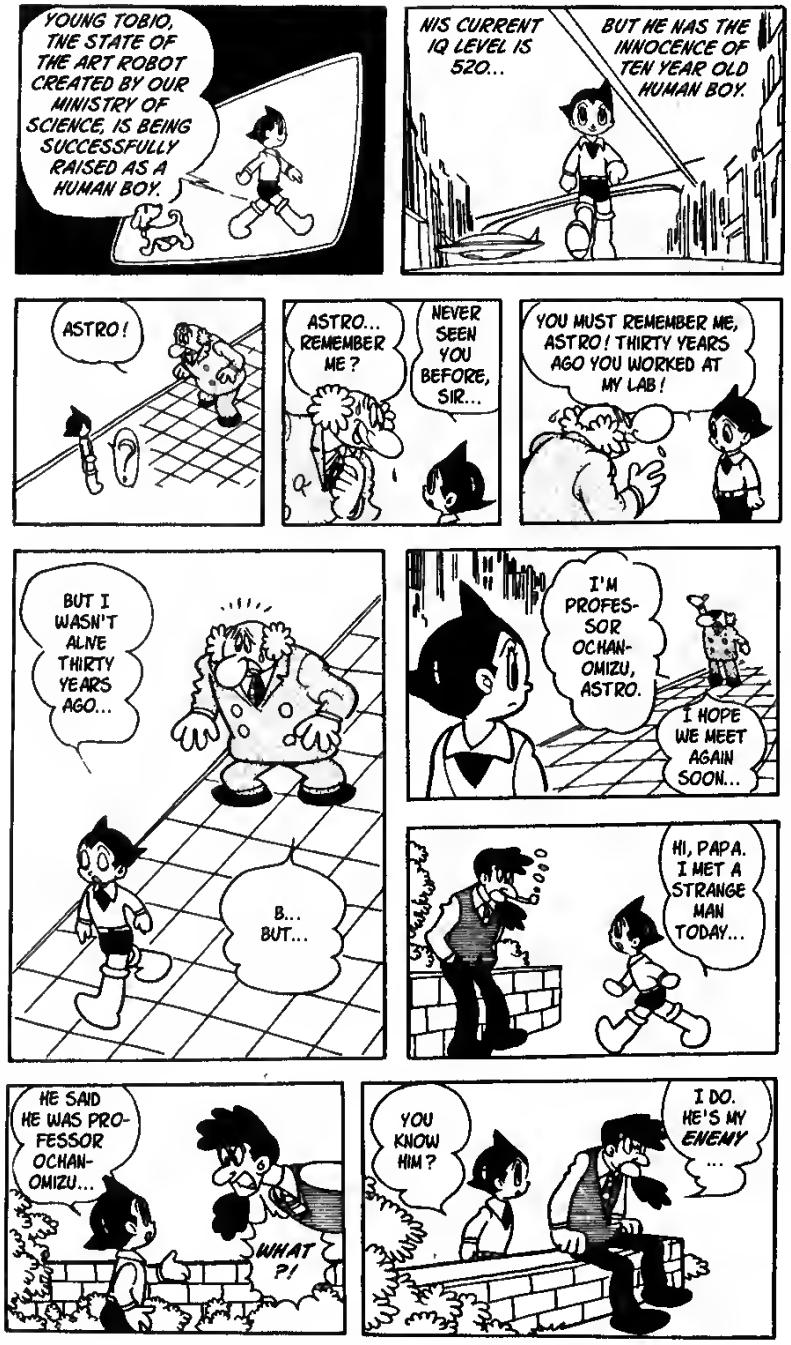

YOU WHAT?
SHE WENT TO THE DEPARTMENT STORE, BUT IT'S RAINING, SO I'M GONNA GO MEET HER AT THE TRAIN STATION WITH THIS UMBRELLA.

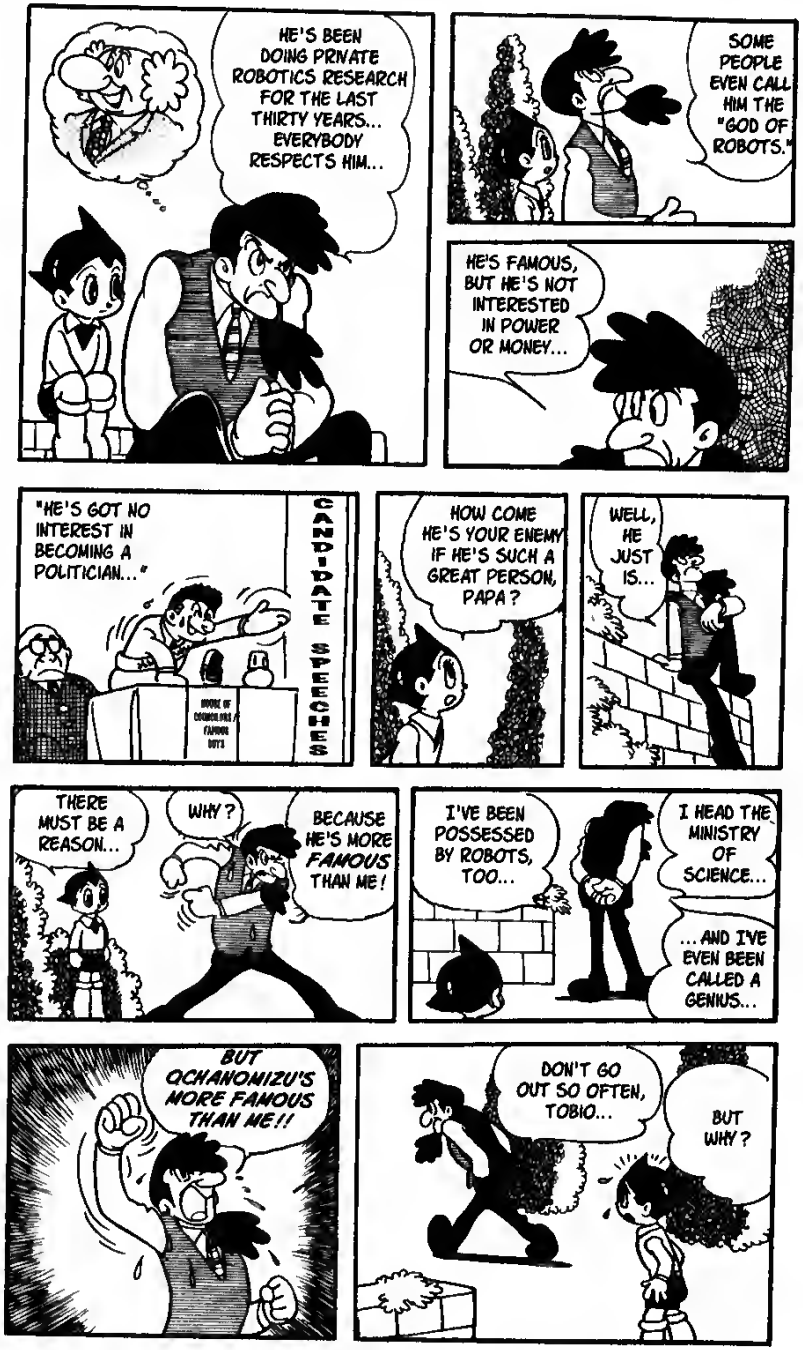

DID SHE TELL YOU TO DO THAT?
NO. I THOUGHT OF IT MYSELF.


TOBIO! NOW YOU'RE THINKING LIKE A HUMAN!
YOU'RE SHOWING YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR PARENTS!

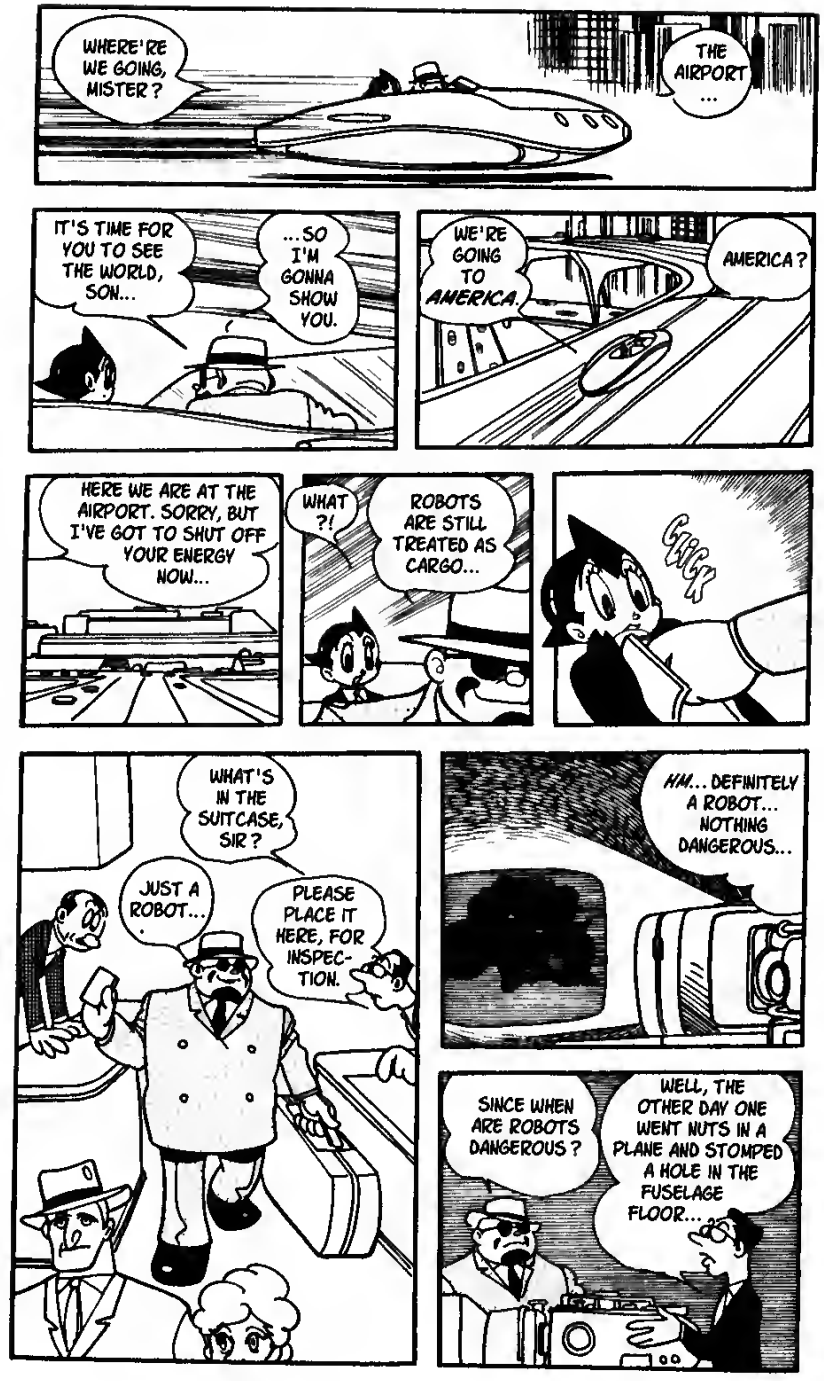
SO, CAN I GO?
OF COURSE!
IT'LL MAKE MOTHER VERY HAPPY...

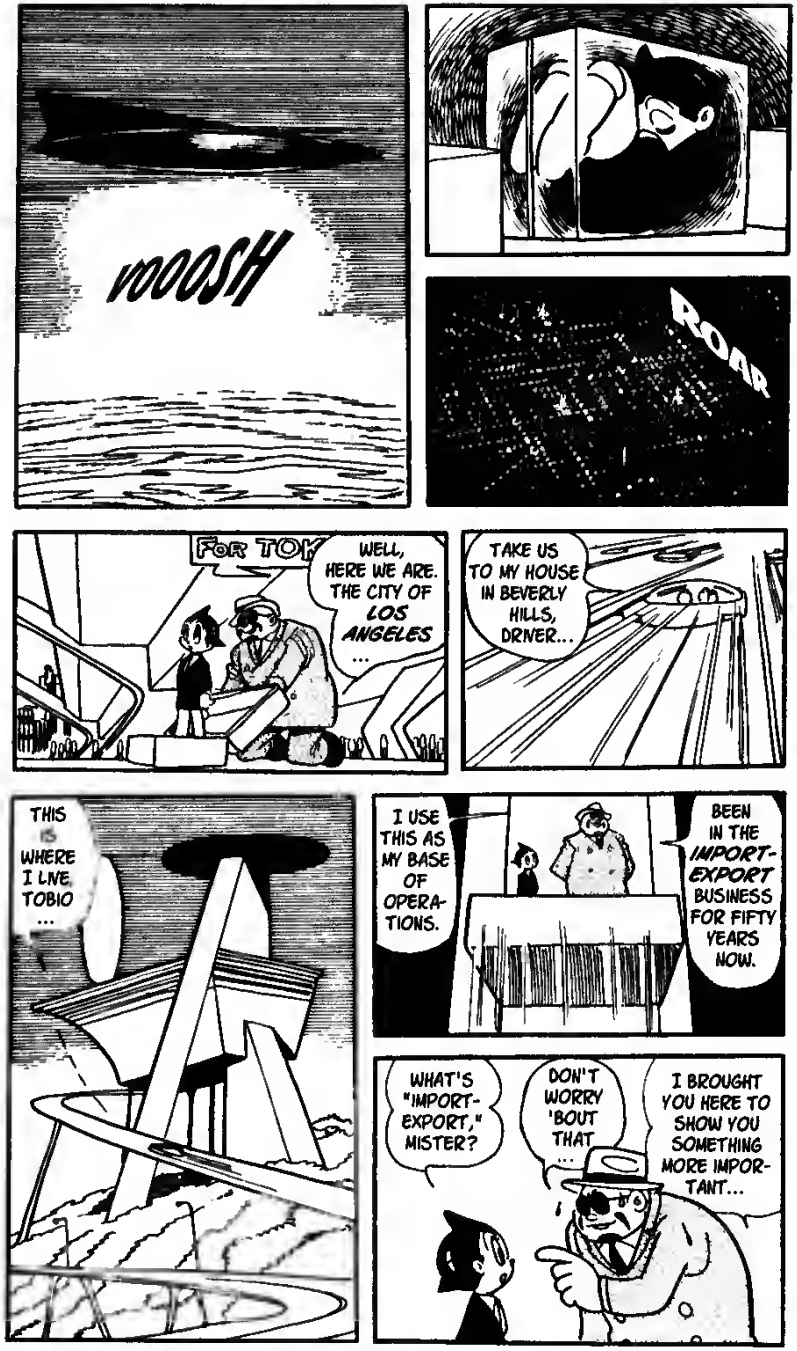
SEE YOU LATER, THEN!
ACK! THAT'S NOT THE WAY HUMANS THINK!


YOUNG TOBIO, THE STATE OF THE ART ROBOT CREATED BY OUR MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, IS BEING SUCCESSFULLY RAISED AS A HUMAN BOY.
HIS CURRENT IQ LEVEL IS 520...
BUT HE HAS THE INNOCENCE OF TEN YEAR OLD HUMAN BOY.
ASTRO!
ASTRO... REMEMBER ME?
NEVER SEEN YOU BEFORE, SIR...
YOU MUST REMEMBER ME, ASTRO! THIRTY YEARS AGO YOU WORKED AT MY LAB!
BUT I WASN'T ALIVE THIRTY YEARS AGO...
B... BUT...
I'M PROFES-SOR OCHAN-OMIZU, ASTRO.
I HOPE WE MEET AGAIN SOON...
HI, PAPA. I MET A STRANGE MAN TODAY...
HE SAID HE WAS PRO-FESSOR OCHAN-OMIZU...
WHAT?!
YOU KNOW HIM?
I DO. HE'S MY ENEMY ...

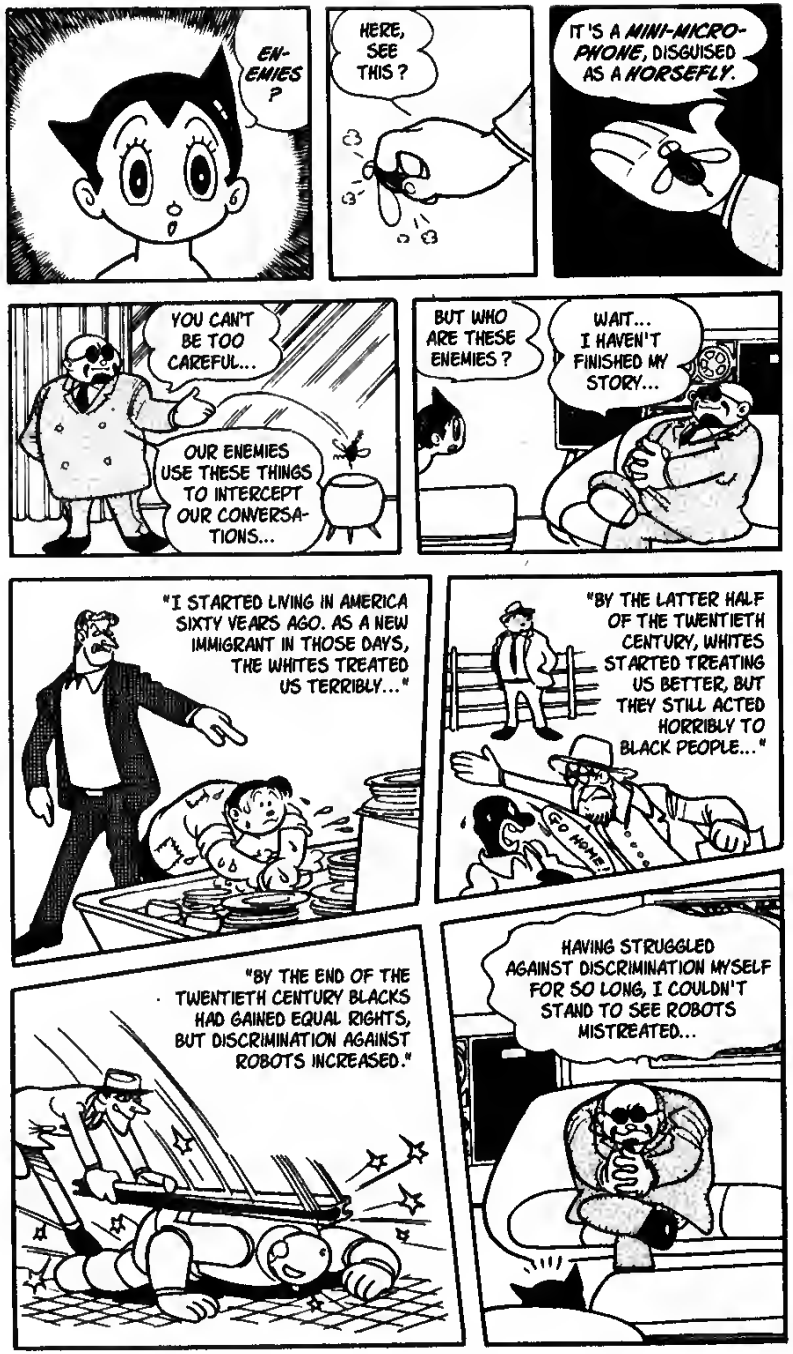

HE'S BEEN DOING PRIVATE ROBOTICS RESEARCH FOR THE LAST THIRTY YEARS... EVERYBODY RESPECTS HIM...
SOME PEOPLE EVEN CALL HIM THE "GOD OF ROBOTS."
HE'S FAMOUS, BUT HE'S NOT INTERESTED IN POWER OR MONEY...
"HE'S GOT NO INTEREST IN BECOMING A POLITICIAN..."
CANDIDATE SPEECHES
HOW COME HE'S YOUR ENEMY IF HE'S SUCH A GREAT PERSON, PAPA?
WELL, HE JUST IS...
THERE MUST BE A REASON...
WHY?
BECAUSE HE'S MORE FAMOUS THAN ME!
I'VE BEEN POSSESSED BY ROBOTS, TOO...
I HEAD THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE...
... AND I'VE EVEN BEEN CALLED A GENIUS...
BUT OCHANOMIZU'S MORE FAMOUS THAN ME!!
DON'T GO OUT SO OFTEN, TOBIO...
BUT WHY?

EVENING, DR. TENMA...
EVERY TIME I GO TO THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE, THEY SAY YOU'RE NOT THERE... I FIGURED YOU'RE TRYING TO AVOID ME...
WHA ...?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?
SO I CAME TO YOUR HOME...
IT'S BEEN A MONTH SINCE YOU CREATED TOBIO...
YOU PROMISED TO LEND HIM TO ME FOR A DAY... REMEMBER?!
BUT I HAVEN'T FINISHED EDUCATING HIM!
DON'T WORRY. I'LL GIVE HIM BACK IN A DAY...
AT LEAST TELL ME WHAT YOU'RE GOING TO DO WITH HIM...
AH, THAT, I'M AFRAID, IS NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS ...
...AND I'M NOT ABOUT TO TELL YOU...
B... BUT...
DON'T FORGET, I SPONSORED HIM...
SEE YOU LATER...
THINK HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT, DEAR?
NO NEED TO WORRY ABOUT YOUNG TOBIO, MADAM! HAH HAH!


WHERE'RE WE GOING, MISTER?
THE AIRPORT ...
IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO SEE THE WORLD, SON...
...SO I'M GONNA SHOW YOU.
WE'RE GOING TO AMERICA.
AMERICA?
HERE WE ARE AT THE AIRPORT. SORRY, BUT I'VE GOT TO SHUT OFF YOUR ENERGY NOW...
WHAT?!
ROBOTS ARE STILL TREATED AS CARGO...
GUCK
WHAT'S IN THE SUITCASE, SIR?
JUST A ROBOT...
PLEASE PLACE IT HERE, FOR INSPEC-TION.
HM... DEFINITELY A ROBOT... NOTHING DANGEROUS...
SINCE WHEN ARE ROBOTS DANGEROUS?
WELL, THE OTHER DAY ONE WENT NUTS IN A PLANE AND STOMPED A HOLE IN THE FUSELAGE FLOOR...


WOOSH
ROAR
FOR TOK
WELL, HERE WE ARE. THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES ...
TAKE US TO MY HOUSE IN BEVERLY HILLS, DRIVER...
THIS IS WHERE I LIVE, TOBIO ...
I USE THIS AS MY BASE OF OPERATIONS.
BEEN IN THE IMPORT-EXPORT BUSINESS FOR FIFTY YEARS NOW.
WHAT'S "IMPORT-EXPORT," MISTER?
DON'T WORRY 'BOUT THAT ...
I BROUGHT YOU HERE TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING MORE IMPORTANT...

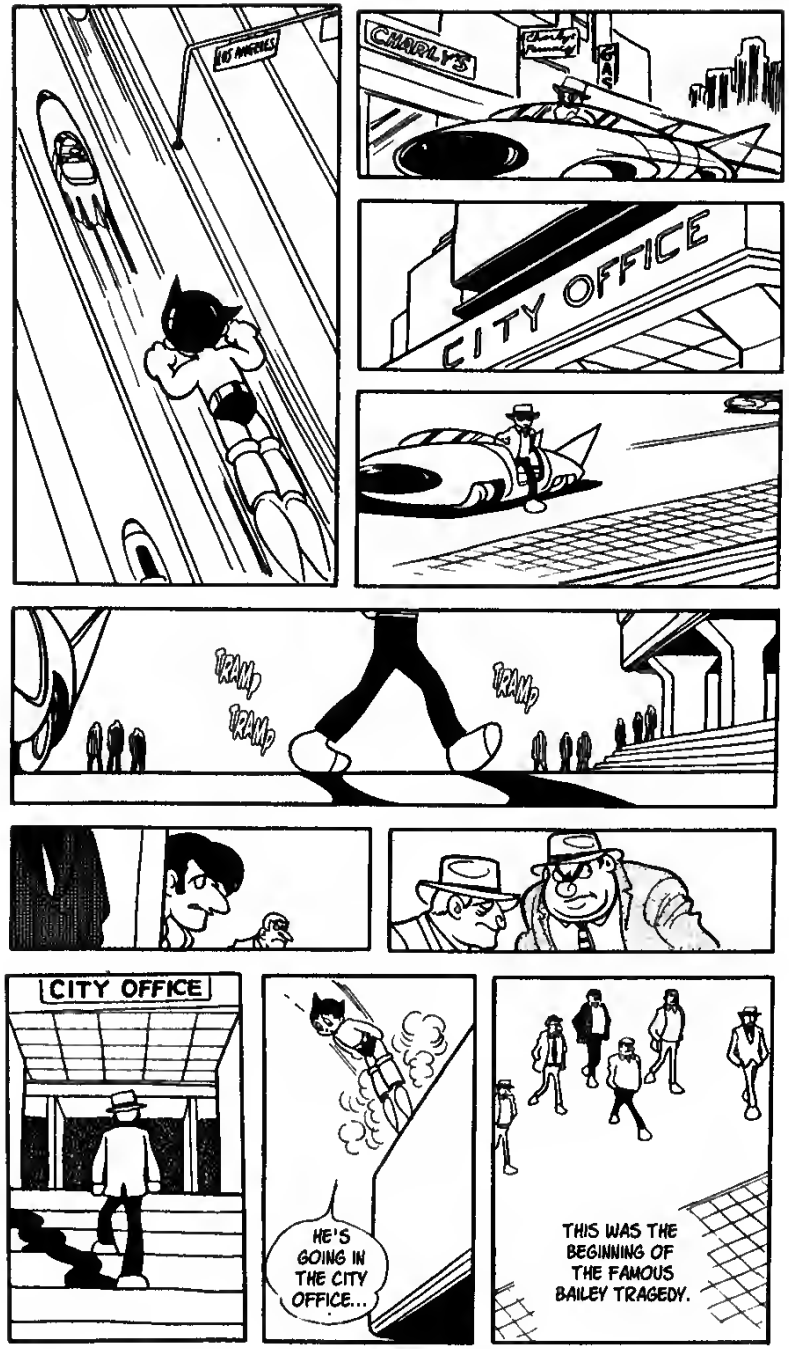
MAKE YOURSELF COMFORTABLE...
WHOOPS... GUESS THAT DOESN'T MEAN MUCH TO A ROBOT, DOES IT... HEH HEH.
NO, BUT I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN...
MIND IF I TAKE OFF THESE CLOTHES?
?
THEY MAKE IT HARD TO MOVE, 'N I'M ALWAYS SO WORRIED THEY'LL TEAR...
HAH HAH! GO RIGHT AHEAD!
NOW, WHEN WE ENTERED THIS HOUSE ...
...DID YOU NOTICE ANYTHING ODD?
HMM. WELL, WHEN WE GOT TO A CERTAIN POINT...
...I COULDN'T HEAR ANY NOISE FROM OUTSIDE AT ALL...
THAT'S RIGHT. IT'S COMPLETELY BLOCKED BY A SPECIAL CURTAIN OF AIR...
IT'S NOT A NEW TECHNOLOGY ...
...BUT THIS HOUSE IS SPECIALLY DESIGNED FOR THIS.
BUT WHY?
BECAUSE WE DON'T WANT OUR ENEMIES TO OVERHEAR US...

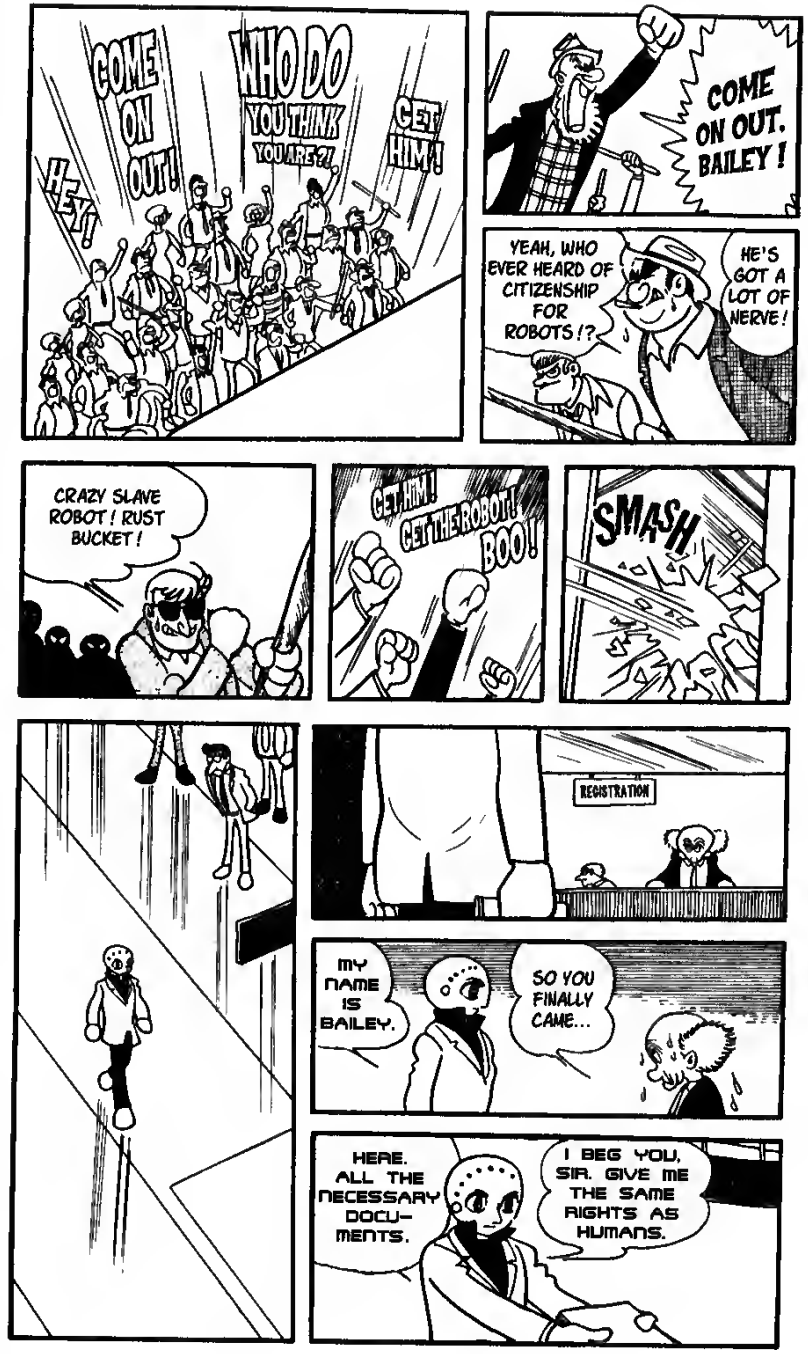

EN-EMIES ?
HERE, SEE THIS ?
IT'S A MINI-MICRO-PHONE, DISGUISED AS A HORSEFLY.
YOU CAN'T BE TOO CAREFUL...
OUR ENEMIES USE THESE THINGS TO INTERCEPT OUR CONVERSA-TIONS...
BUT WHO ARE THESE ENEMIES ?
WAIT... I HAVEN'T FINISHED MY STORY...
"I STARTED LIVING IN AMERICA SIXTY YEARS AGO. AS A NEW IMMIGRANT IN THOSE DAYS, THE WHITES TREATED US TERRIBLY..."
"BY THE LATTER HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY, WHITES STARTED TREATING US BETTER, BUT THEY STILL ACTED HORRIBLY TO BLACK PEOPLE..."
GO HOME!
"BY THE END OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY BLACKS HAD GAINED EQUAL RIGHTS, BUT DISCRIMINATION AGAINST ROBOTS INCREASED."
HAVING STRUGGLED AGAINST DISCRIMINATION MYSELF FOR SO LONG, I COULDN'T STAND TO SEE ROBOTS MISTREATED...

IT'S THE SAME IN JAPAN, OF COURSE, BUT HERE IN AMERICA THE WAY ROBOTS ARE TREATED...
...IS REALLY HORRIBLE ...
YOU'D UNDERSTAND IF YOU SAW WHAT WE CALL THE "ROBOT GRAVEYARD" ON THE EDGE OF TOWN HERE...
"ROBOT GRAVE-YARD"?
RIGHT. ONE LOOK AT THAT...
AND ANY NORMAL PERSON WOULD WEEP...
I'M A HUMAN, BUT I KNOW AN AWFUL LOT ABOUT SUFFERING AND PERSECU-TION...
...SO I'VE DECIDED TO DO WHAT I CAN TO HELP ROBOTS!
SIR... A ROBOT NAMED BAILEY'S HERE...
HE'S HERE!
TOBIO, THIS IS BAILEY, WHO'S PROMOTING A MOVEMENT TO GIVE HUMAN RIGHTS TO ROBOTS.
A FINE MAN, IF THERE EVER WAS ONE...

HI, I'M BAILEY...
AFTER-NOON... I'M TOBIO...
I LIKE YOUR HAIR-STYLE...
?
HOW COME BAILEY DOESN'T HAVE ANY HAIR, MR. KOH?
BECAUSE IT WAS TORN OFF...
BY WHO?
BY A WHITE MAN...
RIPPING THE HAIR OFF ROBOTS IS A POPULAR SPORT...
SOME WHITE PEOPLE CAN'T STAND THE IDEA OF ROBOTS LOOKING LIKE HUMANS, SO THEY TEAR THEIR HAIR OFF...
I'M FINALLY READY, MR. HOH...
SO THE TIME'S COME, EH?
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?
HE'S GOING TO BECOME A HUMAN TODAY, TOBIO...

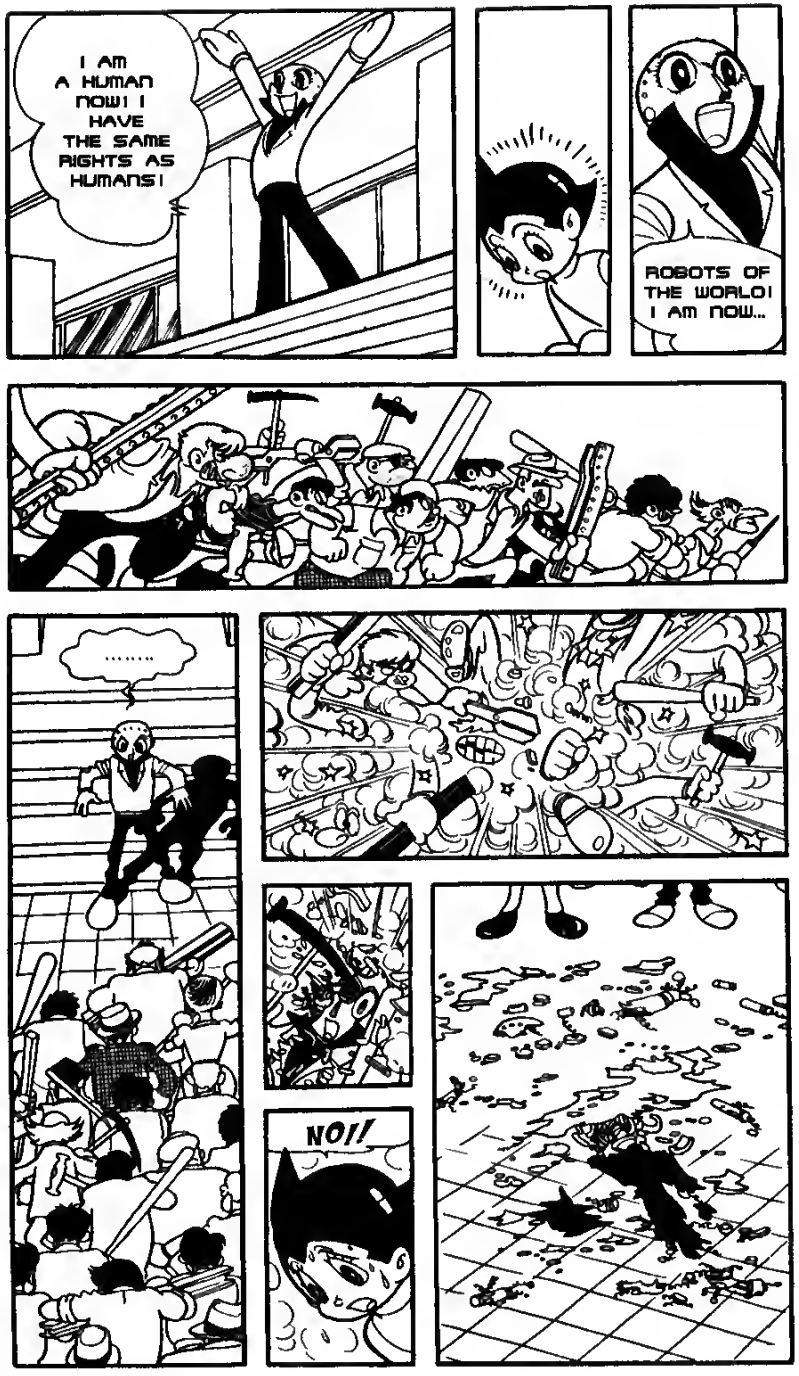
I SHALL GO TO THE CITY OFFICE AND HAVE THEM REGISTER ME AS A HUMAN.
UNTIL NOW, ROBOTS HAVE NOT BEEN ALLOW TO REGISTER AS HUMANS...
...BUT TODAY I'M GOING TO MAKE SURE THEY RECOGNIZE ME AS THEIR EQUAL.
BE CAREFUL, BAILEY...
ALL THE WHITES OPPOSED TO REGISTERING ROBOTS'LL BE AFTER YOU...
YOU'LL NEED TO BE BRAVE...
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME, MR. HOH... I'LL BE FINE...
SO, TOBIO...
I WANT YOU TO SECRETLY FOLLOW HIM...
THIS IS SOMETHING THAT'LL GO DOWN IN HISTORY...
... AND I REALLY WANT BAILEY TO SUCCEED...
HE'S AMAZING. HE MIGHT NOT EVEN MAKE IT BACK ALIVE...
PROTECT HIM, TOBIO...
... AND IF ANYONE GETS IN THE WAY, TAKE CARE OF THEM.
YES SIR...

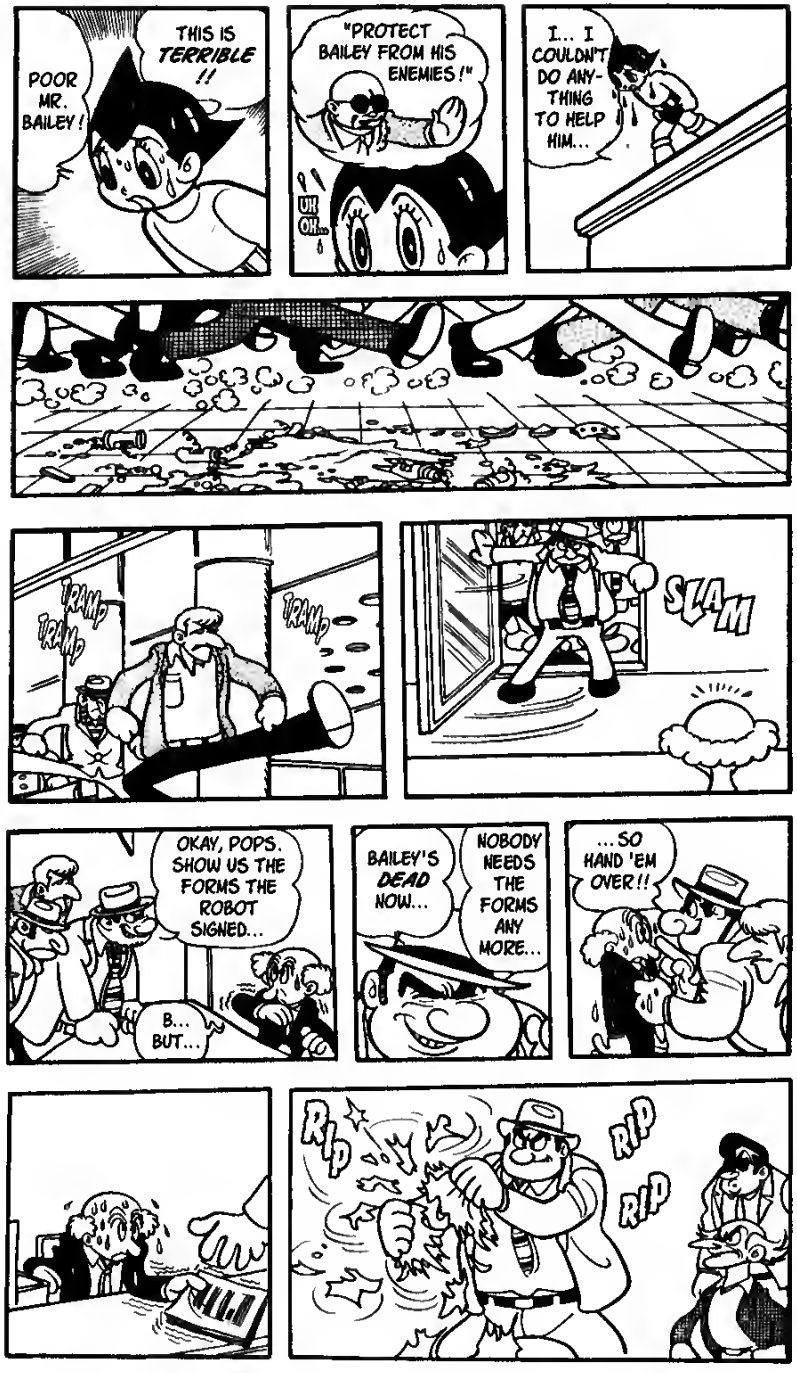

LOS ANGELES
CHARLY'S
CITY OFFICE
TRAM
TRAM
TRAM
CITY OFFICE
HE'S GOING IN THE CITY OFFICE...
THIS WAS THE BEGINNING OF THE FAMOUS BAILEY TRAGEDY.


COME ON OUT!
WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?!
HEY!
GET HIM!
COME ON OUT, BAILEY!
YEAH, WHO EVER HEARD OF CITIZENSHIP FOR ROBOTS!?
HE'S GOT A LOT OF NERVE!
CRAZY SLAVE ROBOT! RUST BUCKET!
GET HIM! GET THE ROBOT!
BOO!
SMASH
REGISTRATION
MY NAME IS BAILEY.
SO YOU FINALLY CAME...
HERE. ALL THE NECESSARY DOCU-MENTS.
I BEG YOU, SIR. GIVE ME THE SAME RIGHTS AS HUMANS.

I BROUGHT ALL THE DOCUMENTS YOU SAID I NEEDED.
NOW I NEED YOU TO PROCESS THEM.
ALL FINE AND WELL, BUT ARE YOU SURE YOU WANT TO APPLY FOR CITIZENSHIP?
IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO RECONSIDER, BAILEY...
ROBOTS'LL NEVER BE EQUAL TO HUMANS, YOU KNOW...
PLEASE PROCESS THE FORMS.
WELL, THAT'S THE EASY PART...
YOU'RE AN AWFULLY STRONG-WILLED ROBOT...
BUT EVEN IF PEOPLE TREAT YOU LIKE A HUMAN...
...IT WON'T HELP MUCH...
NO, IT WILL...
IF I GET THE SAME RIGHTS AS HUMANS...
...ALL THE OTHER ROBOTS WILL FOLLOW ME...
I DOUBT THAT'S GOING TO HAPPEN...
...BUT GO AHEAD, SIGN HERE...
BY SIGNING HERE...
I'LL BECOME A HUMAN, RIGHT?
RIGHT.
I'VE WAITED YEARS FOR THIS DAY...
DON'T BLAME ME FOR WHAT HAPPENS ...

SO WITH THIS...
...YOU'RE A CITIZEN...
HOO-RAY!!
I'M A HUMAN!!
DON'T FORGET, MR. BAILEY...
YOU'VE JUST MADE A MILLION NEW ENEMIES...
HAND OVER THE ROBOT!
SMASH
DON'T TREAT HIM LIKE A HUMAN!
COME ON OUT, BAILEY!
THE MOMENT YOU GO OUT THAT DOOR THEY'LL TEAR YOU TO SHREDS..
BETTER LEAVE FROM THE BACK...
GET THE ROBOT!
HEY, TIN MAN!
NO RIGHTS FOR ROBOTS!
HERE HE COMES!
NO. I'M A HUMAN NOW..
THEY WON'T DESTROY ME, BECAUSE THEY'D BE CHARGED WITH MURDER ...
I'M GOING TO GO OUT THE FRONT DOOR. THE WAY I'M SUPPOSED TO.
DEATH TO ROBOTS!
GET HIM!
GET THE TIN MAN!


I AM A HUMAN NOW! I HAVE THE SAME RIGHTS AS HUMANS!
ROBOTS OF THE WORLD! I AM NOW...
.....
NO!!

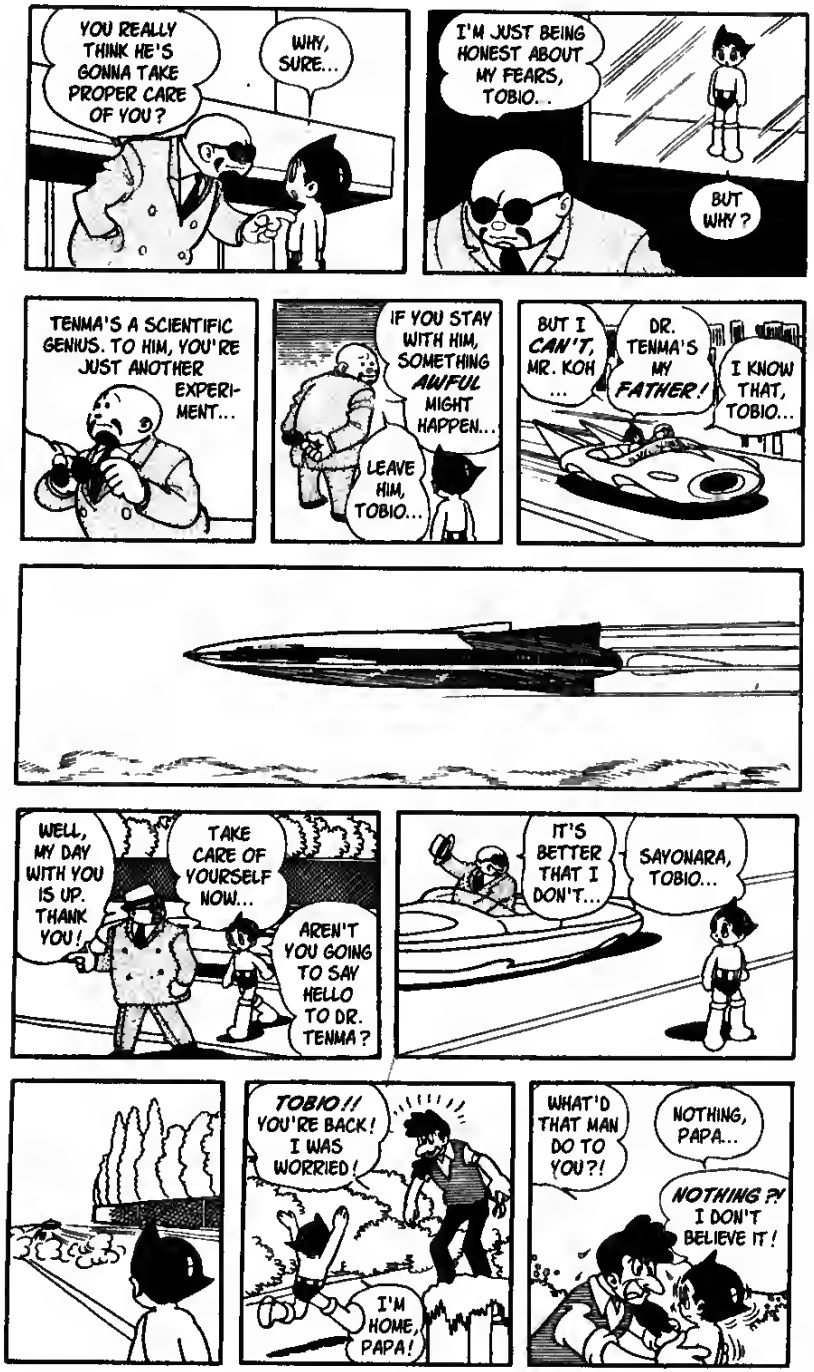

POOR MR. BAILEY!
THIS IS TERRIBLE !!
"PROTECT BAILEY FROM HIS ENEMIES!"
OH OH...
I... I COULDN'T DO ANY-THING TO HELP HIM...
TRAMP TRAMP
TRAMP
SLAM
OKAY, POPS. SHOW US THE FORMS THE ROBOT SIGNED...
B... BUT...
BAILEY'S DEAD NOW...
NOBODY NEEDS THE FORMS ANY MORE...
...SO HAND 'EM OVER!!
RIP
RIP
RIP

FROM NOW ON, WE SMASH ANY ROBOT WITH THE NERVE TO TRY 'N BECOME HUMAN!
SEE YA LATER, MR. OFFICIAL!
YAY!
HOORAY!
THEY SMASHED BAILEY RIGHT BEFORE MY EYES, AND ALL I DID WAS WATCH...
HOORAH!
YAY!
UH OH...
WELL? WHERE'S BAILEY?
HE WAS DESTROYED IN FRONT OF THE CITY OFFICE...
YOU SAW IT HAPPEN?
YES...
I SEE...
SO I EVEN YOU COULDN'T HELP HIM...
I KNOW ROBOTS AREN'T ALLOWED TO ATTACK PEOPLE, AND I GUESS IT'S TRUE OF YOU, TOO...

LISTEN, TOBIO...
YOU SAW BAILEY. YOU NOW KNOW HOW BRAVE HE WAS, RIGHT?
I WANT YOU TO BECOME LIKE HIM, TO FIGHT FOR THE RIGHTS OF ROBOTS. WILL YOU PROMISE ME THAT?
YES SIR...
THAT, TOBIO, MAKES BRINGING YOU HERE WORTHWHILE...
MR. TABA KOH!
WE'VE GOT AN EMER-GENCY!
YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE! THE HUMANS ARE GOING CRAZY! THEY'RE COMING TO ATTACH YOU!
THEY'RE FURIOUS BECAUSE YOU'VE ALWAYS BEFRIENDED ROBOTS!!
LET'S GO!
GET 'IM!
YOU'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!
NO. I'M NOT GOING ANY-WHERE.
THIS IS MY HOME!
I'LL GRAB ANY MEMBERS OF A CRAZY MOB AND HAND 'EM OVER TO THE POLICE!
WE'LL HELP YOU THERE, SIR!
THEY'RE ALMOST HERE!
NO! YOU ROBOTS'VE GOTTA HIDE! NOW!

GET 'IM!
COME ON OUT, KOH!
GET 'IM!
BAM
BAM
BAM
BAM
OPEN UP!
TRAI-TOR!
TRAITOR!
COME ON OUT!
ROBO-LOVER!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME! YOU GUYS RUN OUT THE BACK DOOR!
B..BUT MR. KOH.. WHAT'LL YOU DO?
COME ON OUT, TABA KOH!
TRAITOR! TRYING TO PROTECT ROBOTS!
COME OUT! WE'LL TEACH YOU A LESSON!
COME OUT OR WE'LL COME IN TO GET YOU!
HERE HE COMES ...
HE'S GOT GUTS, BUT WE'LL SHOW 'IM A THING OR TWO...
HOLD IT!

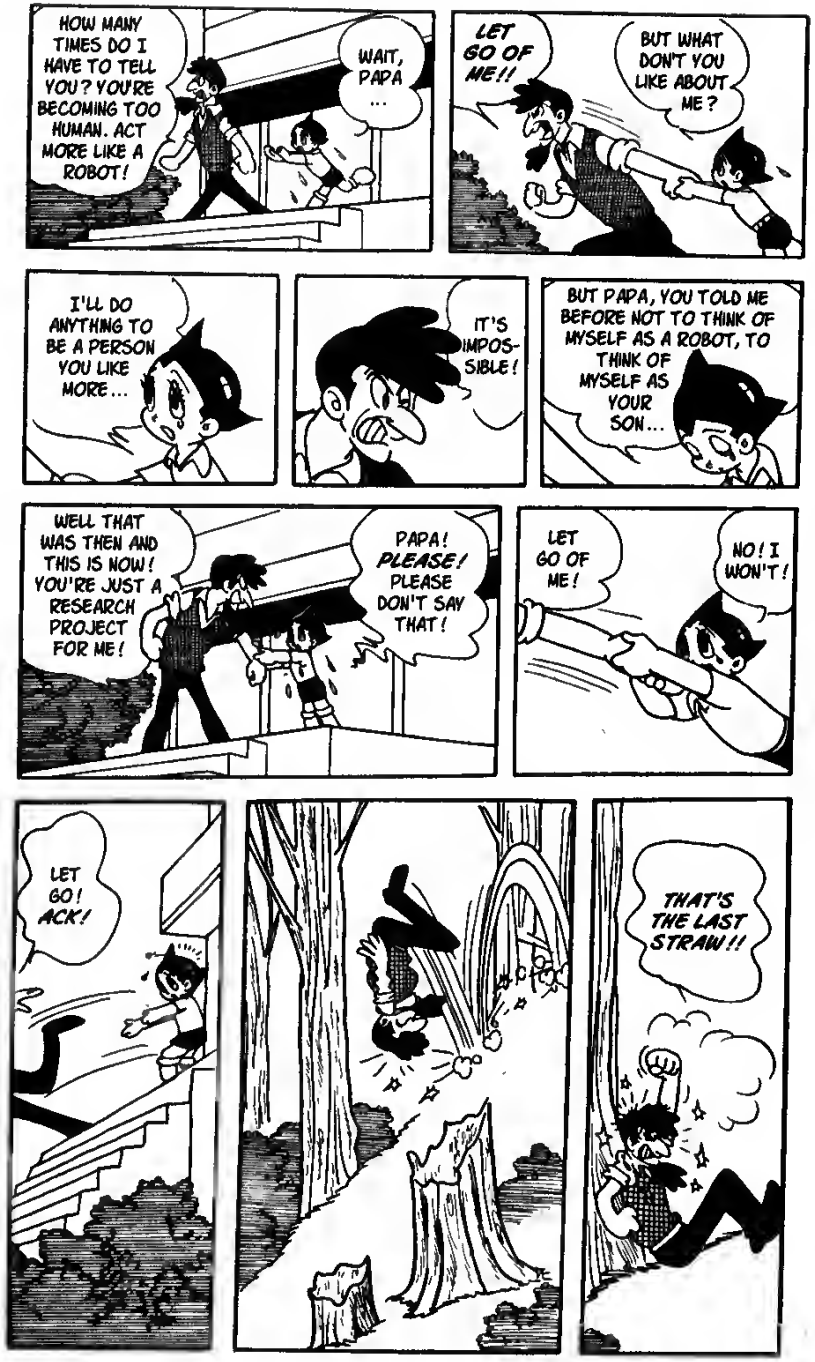
BEFORE YOU SWING THAT CLUB, TAKE A LOOK AT THIS...
FWIP
YIKES!
THOSE ARE GRENADES!!
THE MOMENT YOU TOUCH ME, THESE GRENADES GO OFF...
....
....
IF YOU KNOW WHAT'S GOOD FOR YOU, GO HOME!
I'VE DEVOTED MY LIFE TO RESISTING THUGS LIKE YOU! YOU OUGHTA BE ASHAMED OF YOURSELVES!
WELL, THAT GOT RID OF 'EM FOR NOW...
I WAS REALLY WORRIED THERE FOR A MOMENT...
WELL, THE DAY'S ALMOST UP, SO AS PROMISED, TOBIO, IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO BACK TO JAPAN...
JUST LET ME GIVE YOU ONE PIECE OF ADVICE...
WHAT IS IT?
DON'T LIVE WITH TENMA ANY MORE...
WHAT?!!


YOU REALLY THINK HE'S GONNA TAKE PROPER CARE OF YOU?
WHY, SURE...
I'M JUST BEING HONEST ABOUT MY FEARS, TOBIO..
BUT WHY?
TENMA'S A SCIENTIFIC GENIUS. TO HIM, YOU'RE JUST ANOTHER EXPERIMENT...
IF YOU STAY WITH HIM, SOMETHING AWFUL MIGHT HAPPEN...
LEAVE HIM, TOBIO...
BUT I CAN'T, MR. KOH ...
DR. TENMA'S MY FATHER!
I KNOW THAT, TOBIO...
WELL, MY DAY WITH YOU IS UP. THANK YOU!
TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF NOW...
AREN'T YOU GOING TO SAY HELLO TO DR. TENMA?
IT'S BETTER THAT I DON'T...
SAYONARA, TOBIO...
TOBIO!! YOU'RE BACK! I WAS WORRIED!
I'M HOME, PAPA!
WHAT'D THAT MAN DO TO YOU?!
NOTHING, PAPA...
NOTHING?! I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

RSTRO GOES TO THE CIRCUS

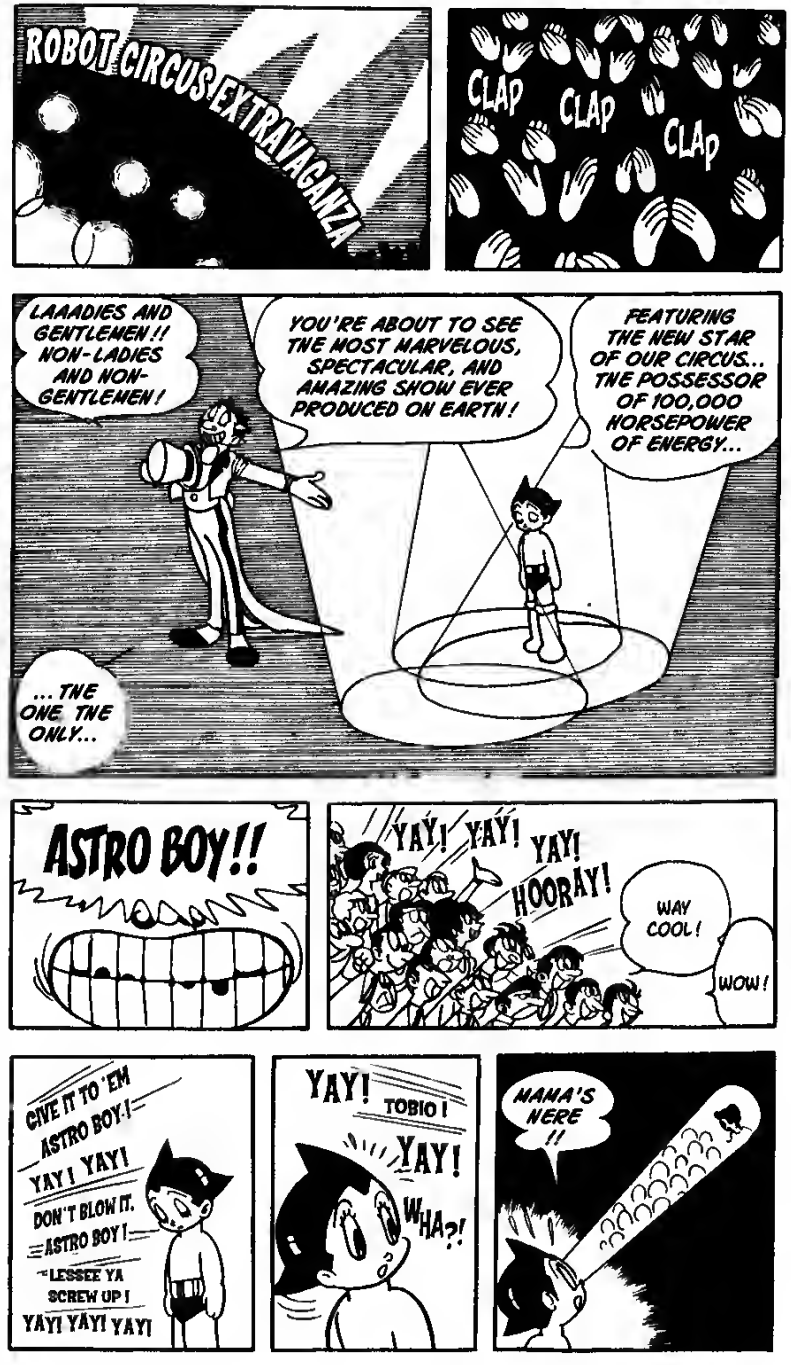
SUMMER PASSED...
WINTER CAME AND WENT...
YEAR AFTER YEAR...
...THE SEASONS REPEATED THEM-SELVES.
AND AS FOR ASTRO ...
HE BECAME MORE AND MORE HUMAN-LIKE.
HE PLAYED WITH HUMAN CHILDREN...
TO NEARLY EVERYONE, HE SEEMED LIKE A NORMAL HUMAN BOY...
BUT THERE WAS ONE OBVIOUS DIFFER-ENCE...
...BETWEEN HIM AND OTHER CHILDREN ...
IT INVOLVED HIS HEIGHT.
NO MATTER HOW MUCH TIME PASSED, TOBIO DIDN'T GROW.

C'MON! YOU'VE GOTTA GROW, EVEN IF IT'S ONLY A FRACTION OF AN INCH!
LIKE THIS?!
YOU FREAK!
I HATE CHILDREN WHO LOOK LIKE THAT!
NOW, DEAR, YOU'VE BEEN DRINKING AGAIN, AND YOU'RE TAKING IT OUT ON TOBIO!
SINCE WHEN CAN'T THE HEAD OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE DRINK? HIC!
POOR TOBIO...
MAMA, HOW COME PAPA'S SO MEAN TO ME THESE DAYS?
IS IT BECAUSE I'M NOT HUMAN?
NO, YOU ARE HUMAN, TOBIO. YOU'RE MY DEAR, DEAR SON...
"YOU SHOULD RUN AWAY FROM HOME... TENMA'S GOING TO START HATING YOU..."
PAPA...
I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT GETTING RID OF THAT FREAK!
BUT DEAR! YOU MADE HIM! YOU CAN'T SAY THAT!
SHUT UP, WOMAN!

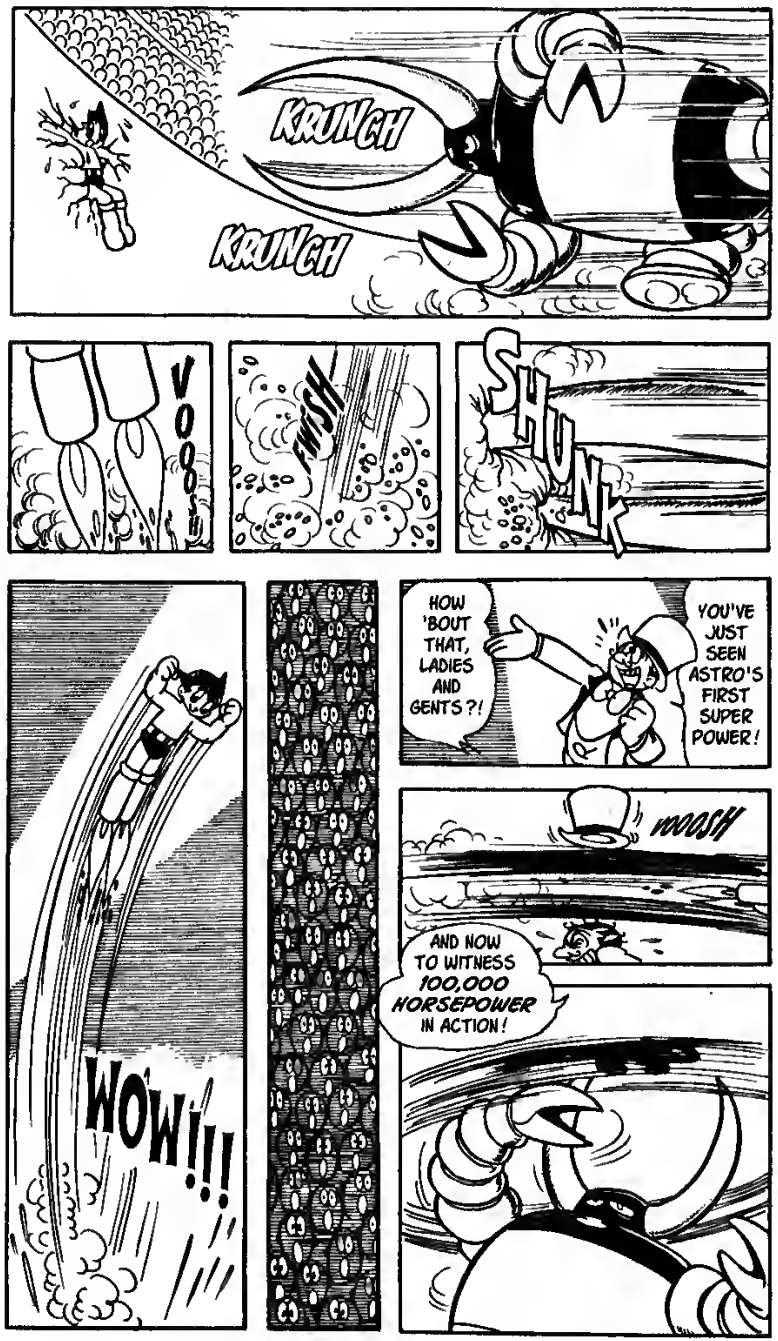

HOW MANY TIMES DO I HAVE TO TELL YOU? YOU'RE BECOMING TOO HUMAN. ACT MORE LIKE A ROBOT!
WAIT, PAPA ...
LET GO OF ME!!
BUT WHAT DON'T YOU LIKE ABOUT ME?
I'LL DO ANYTHING TO BE A PERSON YOU LIKE MORE...
IT'S IMPOS-SIBLE!
BUT PAPA, YOU TOLD ME BEFORE NOT TO THINK OF MYSELF AS A ROBOT, TO THINK OF MYSELF AS YOUR SON...
WELL THAT WAS THEN AND THIS IS NOW! YOU'RE JUST A RESEARCH PROJECT FOR ME!
PAPA! PLEASE! PLEASE DON'T SAY THAT!
LET GO OF ME!
NO! I WON'T!
LET GO! ACK!
THAT'S THE LAST STRAW!!

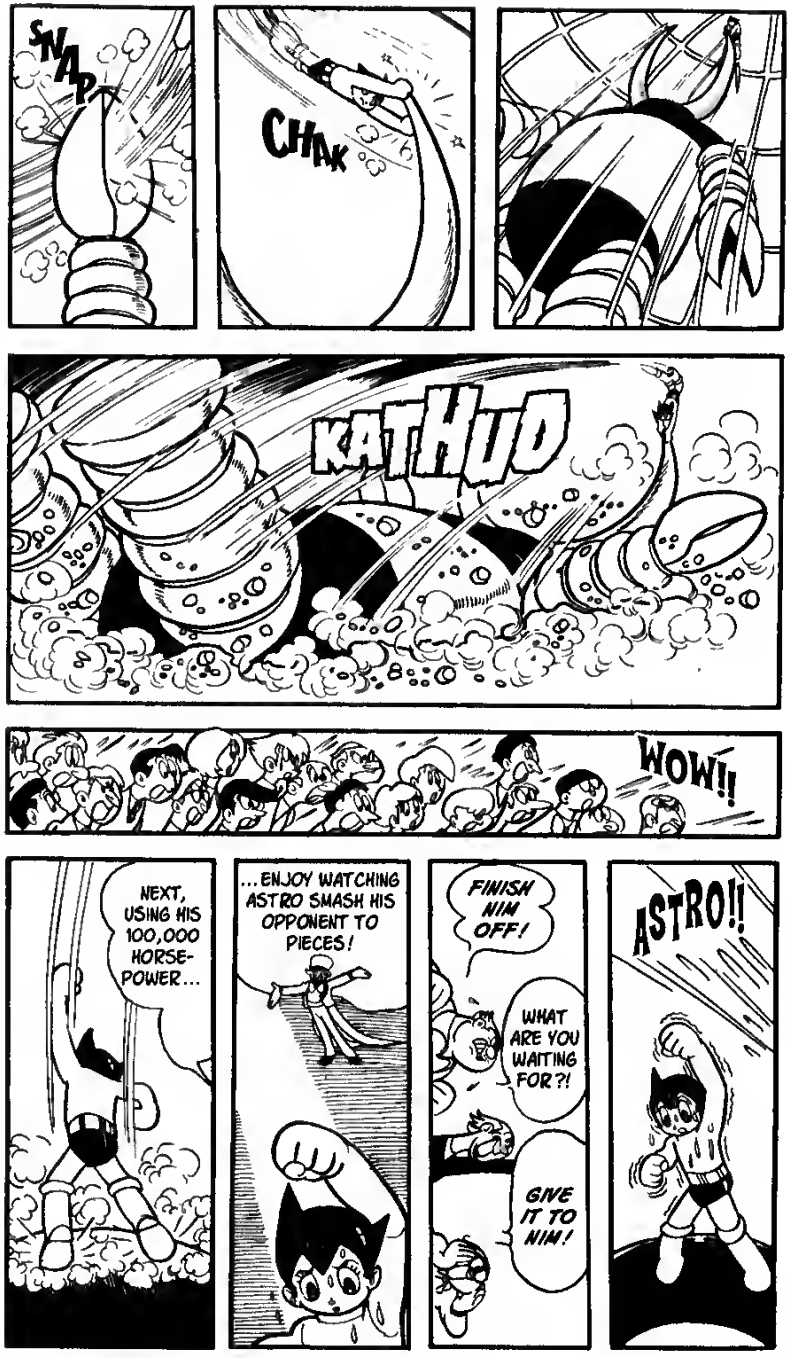
HERE'S THE DEED OF TRANSFER. I JUST NEED YOUR SIGNATURE!
WELL, ACCORDING TO THIS, YOU GRANT ME, THE LESSEE, THE RIGHT TO USE TOBIO...
...IN ANY WAY, FORM, OR FASHION I SEE FIT...
RIGHT. IT'S UP TO YOU.
SO YOU DON'T MIND IF I USE HIM IN THE CIRCUS?
GO AHEAD. JUST DON'T USE THE NAME "TOBIO"...
... AND IF YOU BREAK HIM...
...YOU PAY ME THREE BILLION YEN IN DAMAGES, OK?
OH, I'LL TAKE VERY GOOD CARE OF HIM, SIR...
DON'T EVEN TRY TO PROTEST, DEAR.
I ALREADY SIGNED THE CONTRACT...
...THEN HERE'S ANOTHER CONTRACT FOR YOU TO SIGN...
B...BUT THESE ARE DIVORCE PAPERS!
OF COURSE THEY ARE! YOU PART WITH TOBIO, YOU PART WITH ME, TOO!
I'D RATHER LIVE WITH HIM THAN SPEND ANOTHER DAY WITH SOMEONE AS COLD AND UNFEELING AS YOU!
I'M HIS MOTHER!!

YOU SURE HAVE CHANGED YOUR OPINION ABOUT ROBOTS ...
GOODBYE, MAMA...
GET IN THE CAR, SONNY. WE DON'T HAVE ALL DAY...
I DON'T WANT TO LEAVE YOU, TOBIO...
NEVER DWELL ON PARTINGS, MA'AM... 'MAKES 'EM ALL THE WORSE...
MAMA!
TOBIO!
TOBIO!
FROM NOW ON, TOBIO, I'LL BE LIKE YER PARENTS. GOT IT?
OKAY ...
NO "OKAYS" NOW. ADDRESS ME AS MASTER!
AND FROM NOW ON YOU'RE NO LONGER TOBIO! YOU'RE ASTRO BOY!

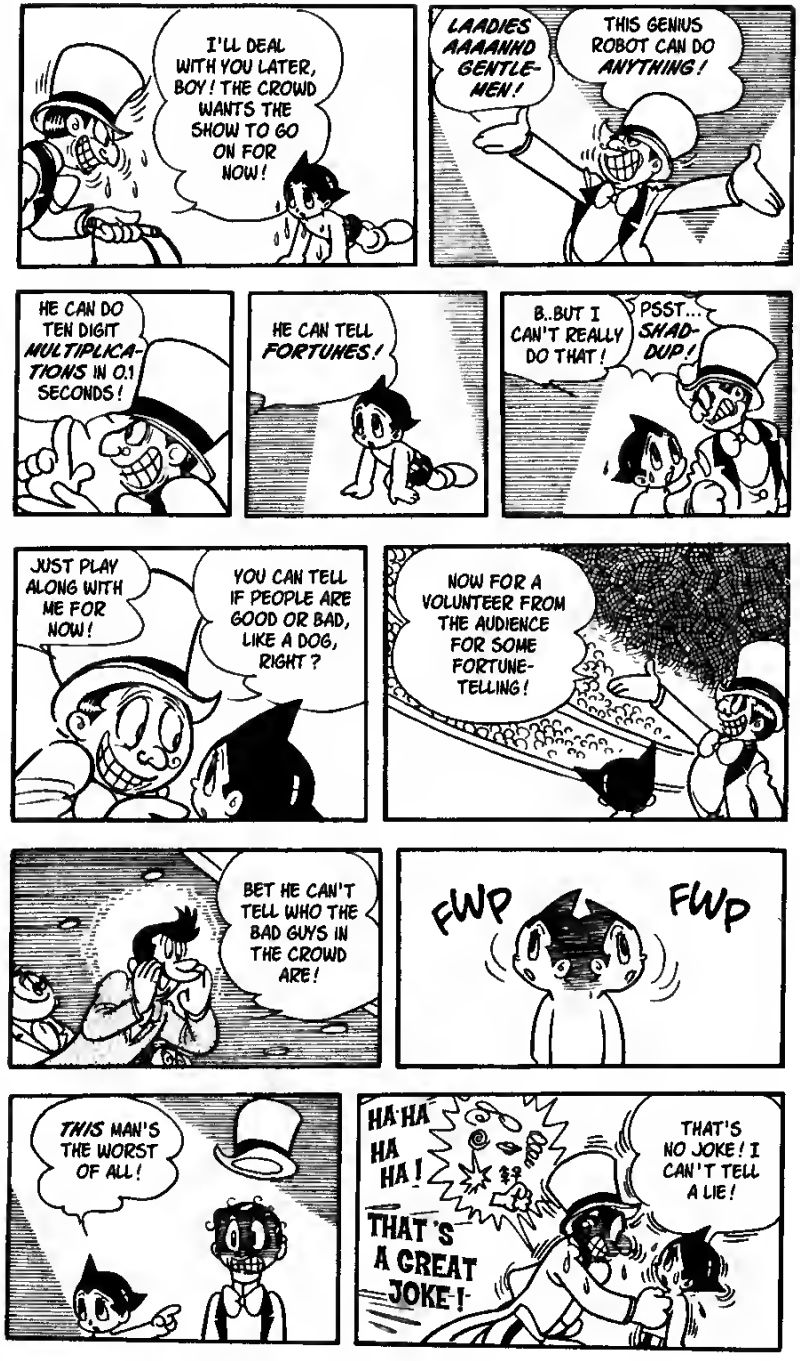

ROBOT CIRCUS EXTRAVAGANZA
CLAP CLAP CLAP
LAAADIES AND GENTLEMEN!! NON-LADIES AND NON-GENTLEMEN!
YOU'RE ABOUT TO SEE THE MOST MARVELOUS, SPECTACULAR, AND AMAZING SHOW EVER PRODUCED ON EARTH!
FEATURING THE NEW STAR OF OUR CIRCUS... THE POSSESSOR OF 100,000 HORSEPOWER OF ENERGY...
... THE ONE THE ONLY...
ASTRO BOY!!
YAY! YAY! YAY! HOORAY!
WAY COOL!
WOW!
GIVE IT TO 'EM ASTRO BOY! YAY! YAY!
DON'T BLOW IT, ASTRO BOY!
LESSEE YA SCREW UP! YAY! YAY! YAY!
YAY! TOBIO! YAY!
WHA?!
MAMA'S HERE!!

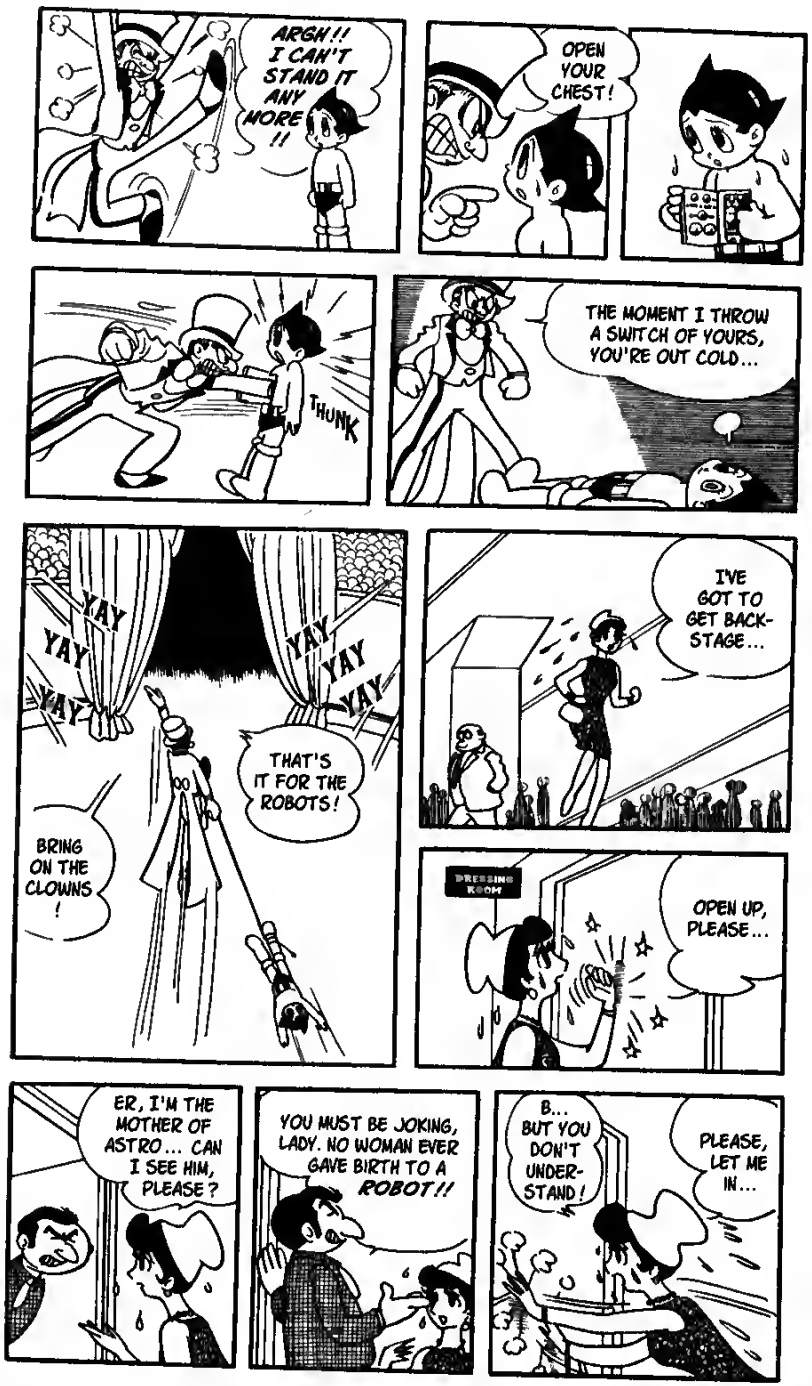
YAY!
YAY!
HOORAH!
HOORAH!
OH WITH THE SHOW!
ENOUGH SPEECH-IFYING!
AND NOW, ASTRO BOY WILL DEMONSTRATE HIS SUPER POWERS BY DEFEATING AN ENEMY!
OH WITH THE SHOW!!
TRAMP
CRUNCH
GIVE 'IM HECK, ASTRO!
SHWACK
EEEK!
SLAM
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE


KRUNCH
KRUNCH
VOOOM
WHOOSH
SHUNK
WOW!!!
HOW 'BOUT THAT, LADIES AND GENTS?!
YOU'VE JUST SEEN ASTRO'S FIRST SUPER POWER!
WOOOSH
AND NOW TO WITNESS 100,000 HORSEPOWER IN ACTION!


SNAP
CHAK
KATHUD
WOW!!
NEXT, USING HIS 100,000 HORSE-POWER...
...ENJOY WATCHING ASTRO SMASH HIS OPPONENT TO PIECES!
FINISH HIM OFF!
WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?!
GIVE IT TO HIM!
ASTRO!!

WHAT'S TAKING SO LONG, ASTRO? DO IT!!
I...I CAN'T...
YOU WHAT?!
EVER FELT AN ELECTRONIC WHIP BEFORE?
IT'S TIME YOU LEARNED A LESSON!
FWIP
SHWACK
AAAIEE!
CRACK
PLEASE, MISTER... STOP...
IT'S RING MASTER TO YOU, BOY!
THIS IS TOO MUCH...
YOU'RE TO OBEY MY ORDERS! UNDER-STAND?
B..BUT I... I CAN'T DESTROY ROBOTS...


I'LL DEAL WITH YOU LATER, BOY! THE CROWD WANTS THE SHOW TO GO ON FOR NOW!
LAADIES AAAANHD GENTLE-MEN!
THIS GENIUS ROBOT CAN DO ANYTHING!
HE CAN DO TEN DIGIT MULTIPLICA-TIONS IN 0.1 SECONDS!
HE CAN TELL FORTUNES!
B..BUT I CAN'T REALLY DO THAT!
PSST... SHAD-DUP!
JUST PLAY ALONG WITH ME FOR NOW!
YOU CAN TELL IF PEOPLE ARE GOOD OR BAD, LIKE A DOG, RIGHT?
NOW FOR A VOLUNTEER FROM THE AUDIENCE FOR SOME FORTUNE-TELLING!
BET HE CAN'T TELL WHO THE BAD GUYS IN THE CROWD ARE!
FWP
FWP
THIS MAN'S THE WORST OF ALL!
HA-HA HA HA!
THAT'S A GREAT JOKE!
THAT'S NO JOKE! I CAN'T TELL A LIE!


ARGH!! I CAN'T STAND IT ANY MORE!!
OPEN YOUR CHEST!
THUNK
THE MOMENT I THROW A SWITCH OF YOURS, YOU'RE OUT COLD...
YAY
YAY
YAY
YAY
YAY
YAY
THAT'S IT FOR THE ROBOTS!
BRING ON THE CLOWNS!
I'VE GOT TO GET BACK-STAGE...
DRESSING ROOM
OPEN UP, PLEASE...
ER, I'M THE MOTHER OF ASTRO... CAN I SEE HIM, PLEASE?
YOU MUST BE JOKING, LADY. NO WOMAN EVER GAVE BIRTH TO A ROBOT!!
B... BUT YOU DON'T UNDER-STAND!
PLEASE, LET ME IN...

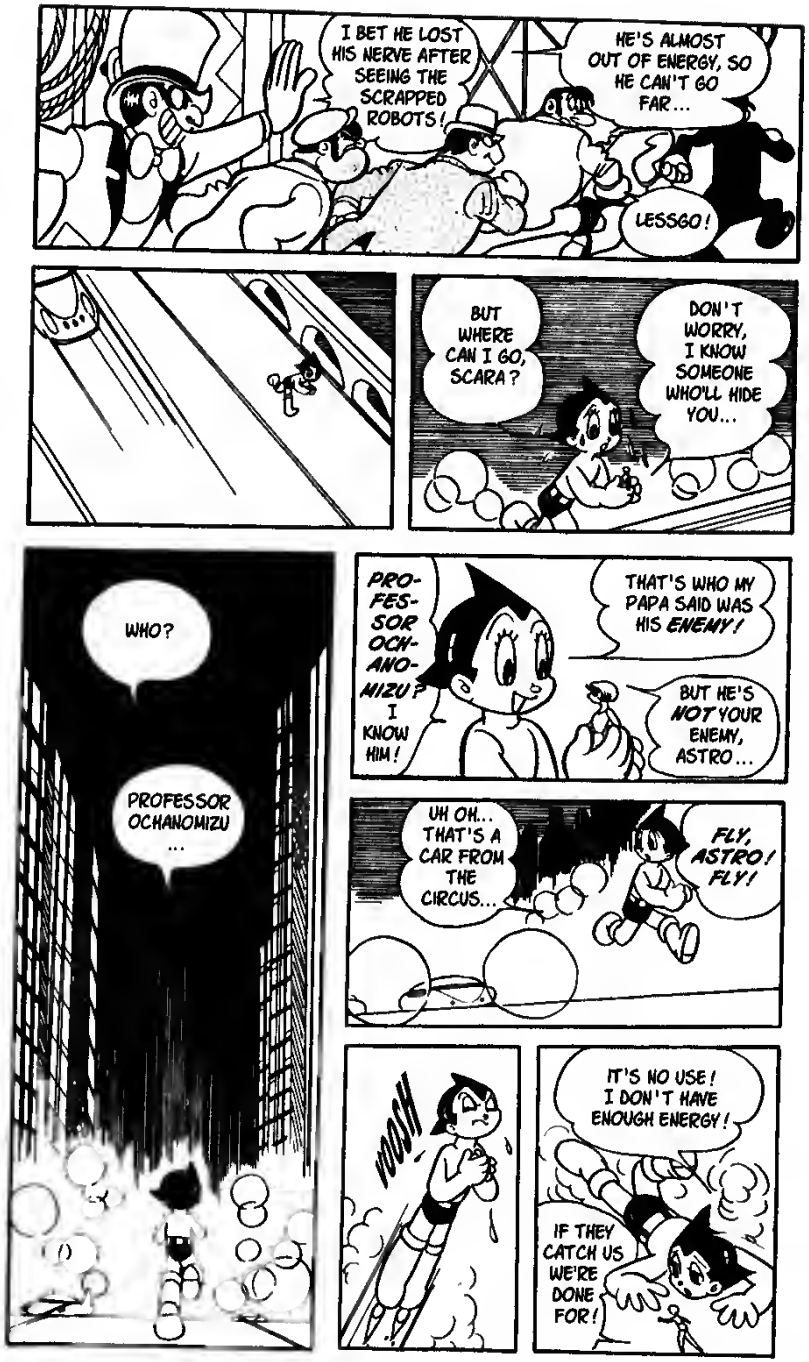
THANKS TO YOU, THE SHOW WAS RUINED!!
I SET YOU UP AS A BIG STAR...
WE COULD HAVE BOTH MADE A TON OF MONEY!
BUT YOU BLASTED TIN 'BOT...YOU WENT AND BETRAVED ME!
B...BUT THE IDEA OF HAVING ROBOTS SMASH OTHER ROBOTS...
IT DOESN'T SEEM RIGHT..
ENOUGH OUT OF YOU!
OWWCH!!
SEE IF I GIVE YOU ANY MORE ENERGY SUPPLIES FOR A WHILE!
AIEEE!
ER... MR. RINGMASTER... COULD YOU PLEASE LET ME SEE MY SON .. JUST FOR A BIT...
YOUR SON? HUMPH. HE BELONGS TO ME NOW, LADY! AND BESIDES, HE'S SO WORTHLESS I'M NOT INCLINED TO LET HIM SEE ANYONE!

ER, CAN'T YOU JUST TELL ME WHERE HE IS?
IN THE BASEMENT, THAT'S WHERE!
PLEASE, SIR... DON'T BEAT HIM...
HOW CAN I GUARANTEE THAT?!
WHOOPS!
THUD BANG THUD CRASH
I CAN'T GUARANTEE ANYTHING!
HOLD IT STEADY NOW... NO WAVERING!
WELL IF YOU WANT MORE, YOU'VE GOTTA FIGHT ROBOTS!
I... CAN'T ...
B...BUT I'M RUNNING OUT OF ENERGY!
YIKES
UNCH

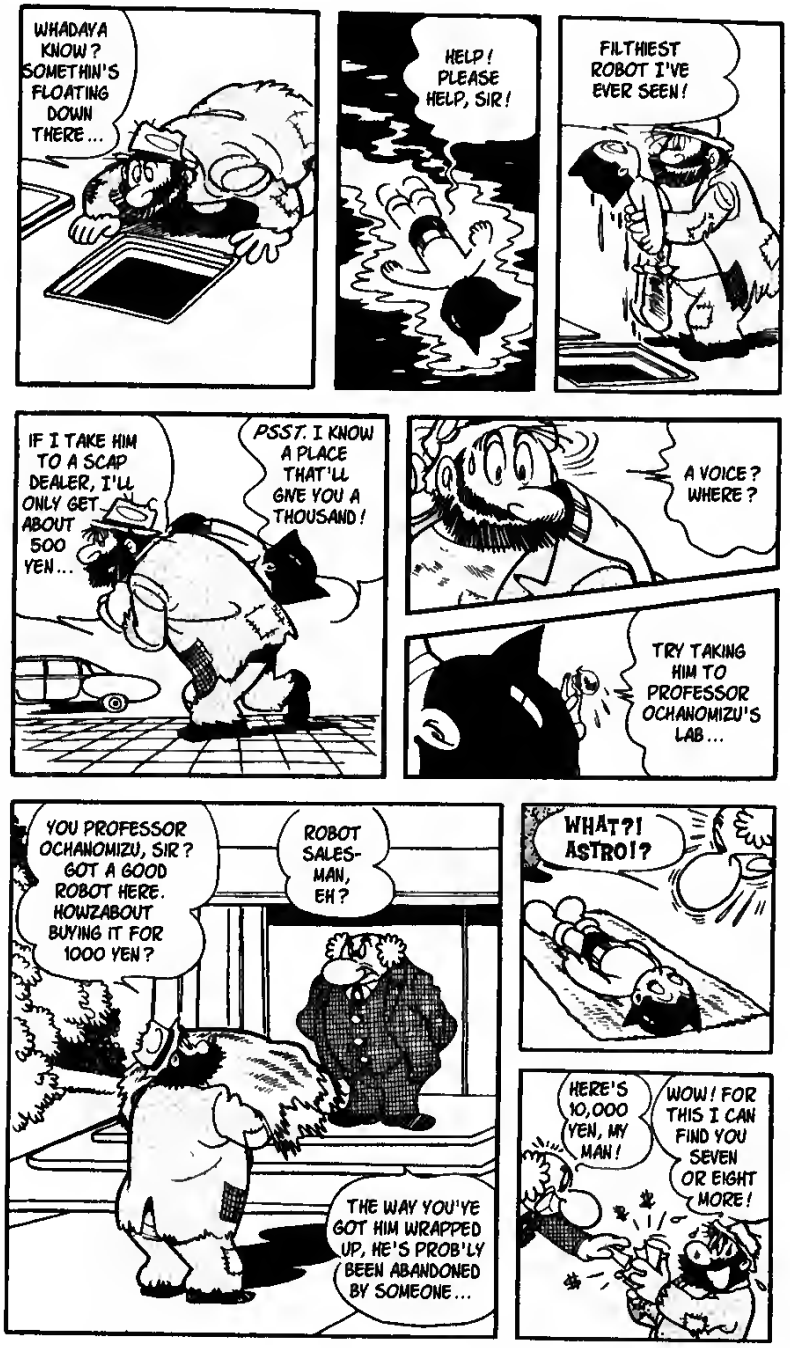
DON'T LET GO OF THAT THING!
WHOA
KA THUD
CRUSH
AIEE!
THUD
HMPH ...
TRY TO MAKE ME OBLI-GATED TO YOU, EH?
YOU THINK I'M GONNA GIVE YOU MORE ENERGY!
WELL, LEMME SHOW YOU SOME-THING!
SEE?! THIS IS WHAT HAPPENS TO ROBOT STARS!

UNDERSTAND NOW? ROBOTS JUST BECOME WORTHLESS SCRAP...
SEE THAT CLOWN THERE? HE WORKED IN THE CIRCUS FOR FIVE YEARS!
HE STARTED TO WEAR OUT, AND IT WOULD'VE COST MORE TO REPAIR HIM THAN HE WAS WORTH...
I HAD HIM SMASHED AND ORDERED A NEW ONE RIGHT AWAY... DIDN'T THINK TWICE ABOUT IT!
GET IT? ROBOTS CAN ALWAYS BE REPLACED! THAT'S THE FATE OF ROBOTS!
DON'T EVER FORGET IT!
ASTRO... SO THERE YOU ARE...
B... BUT WHO ARE YOU?

I'M SCARA REMEMBER?
I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE THE PERSON I MET ONCE RIGHT AFTER I WAS BORN! YOU'RE AS TINY AS A BUG...
HOW'D YOU KNOW I WAS HERE?!
... BECAUSE I'M ALWAYS NEARBY YOU...
I FOLLOW YOU EVERY WHERE ...
GOSH, YOU SURE ARE A MYSTERIOUS PERSON...
YOU NEED TO RUN AWAY FROM THIS CIRCUS, ASTRO. YOU NEED TO BE FREE...
BUT I CAN'T ...
MY PAPA ONLY SENT ME HERE FOR AWHILE...
NO, ASTRO. HE SOLD YOU...
IF YOU STAY HERE...
...THE RINGMASTER'LL USE YOU TILL YOU WEAR OUT...
I KNOW. HE JUST SHOWED ME ALL THE ROBOTS HE'S SCRAPPED...
SO YOU UNDERSTAND, RIGHT?
BUT WHERE SHOULD I GO?
I KNOW A GOOD PLACE, ASTRO ...
WHAT?! ASTRO'S NOT HERE?!
SOMEONE SAW HIM SNEAK OUT THE BACK...
WELL, GO FIND HIM, YOU IDIOTS!


I BET HE LOST HIS NERVE AFTER SEEING THE SCRAPPED ROBOTS!
HE'S ALMOST OUT OF ENERGY, SO HE CAN'T GO FAR...
LESSGO!
BUT WHERE CAN I GO, SCARA?
DON'T WORRY, I KNOW SOMEONE WHO'LL HIDE YOU...
WHO?
PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU ...
PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU? I KNOW HIM!
THAT'S WHO MY PAPA SAID WAS HIS ENEMY!
BUT HE'S NOT YOUR ENEMY, ASTRO...
UH OH... THAT'S A CAR FROM THE CIRCUS...
FLY, ASTRO! FLY!
WOOSH
IT'S NO USE! I DON'T HAVE ENOUGH ENERGY!
IF THEY CATCH US WE'RE DONE FOR!

HERE, GET IN THIS MAN-HOLE!
SKREECH
HE JUMPED DOWN THE SEWER!
WHAT A MESS...
WHAT'LL WE DO?
HE'S GOTTA COME UP SOME-TIME. FORGET FOLLOWING HIM IN THERE... LET'S GUARD THE OPENINGS!
LET'S HOPE WE CATCH HIM! SEAL THE MANHOLE COVERS WITH NETS!
SPLASH
SPLASH
DON'T DROP ME, ASTRO...
SQUEEK
SQUEEK!
SPLASH
SPLASH
IT'S GETTING DEEPER 'N DEEPER!
KABLUB
EEK!


WHADAYA KNOW? SOMETHIN'S FLOATING DOWN THERE...
HELP! PLEASE HELP, SIR!
FILTHIEST ROBOT I'VE EVER SEEN!
IF I TAKE HIM TO A SCAP DEALER, I'LL ONLY GET ABOUT 500 YEN...
PSST. I KNOW A PLACE THAT'LL GIVE YOU A THOUSAND!
A VOICE? WHERE?
TRY TAKING HIM TO PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU'S LAB...
YOU PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU, SIR? GOT A GOOD ROBOT HERE. HOWZABOUT BUYING IT FOR 1000 YEN?
ROBOT SALES-MAN, EH?
THE WAY YOU'VE GOT HIM WRAPPED UP, HE'S PROB'LY BEEN ABANDONED BY SOMEONE...
WHAT?! ASTRO!?
HERE'S 10,000 YEN, MY MAN!
WOW! FOR THIS I CAN FIND YOU SEVEN OR EIGHT MORE!

ASTRO! WHAT HAPPENED TO YOU?
YOU'RE COMPLETELY OUT OF ENERGY!
THIS IS TERRI-BLE!
I BET THAT STUPID CIRCUS RING-MASTER HASN'T REFILLED YOU AT ALL!
HERE WE GO... I'LL MAKE YOU FEEL BETTER.
AH, YOU'RE COMING TO! IT'S ME, ASTRO, PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU!
ACK!
PAPA WARNED ME TO WATCH OUT FOR YOU!
BUT WHY?
HE SAID YOU WERE HIS ENEMY!
ENEMY? TENMA'S STILL TALKING THAT WAY?
HMPH! I'M NOTHING OF THE SORT. JUST A FRIEND OF ROBOTS, THAT'S ALL!
.....
.....
PLEASE DON'T SEND ME BACK TO THE CIRCUS, OK?
DON'T WORRY, ASTRO. THINK OF THIS PLACE AS A REFUGE FOR ROBOTS!

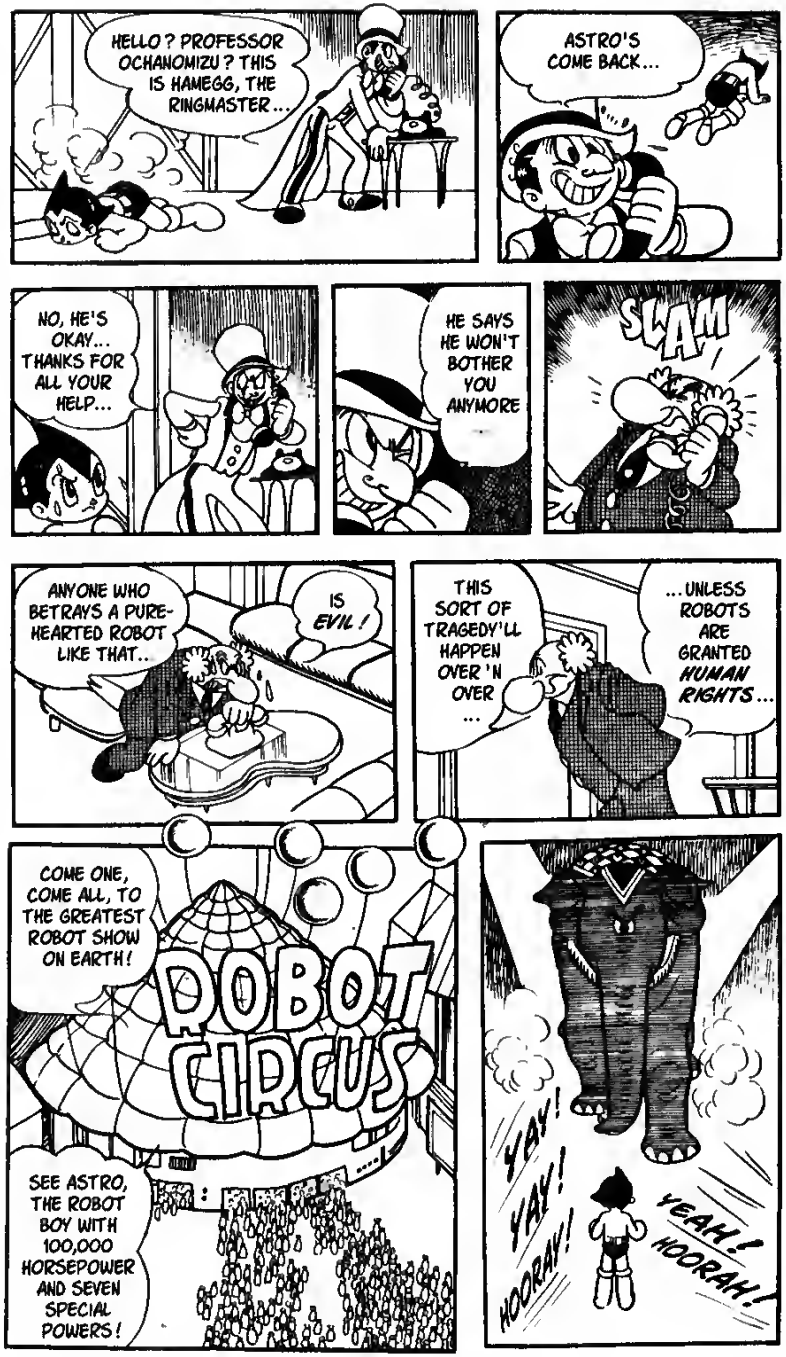
ROBOTS COME HERE ALL THE TIME WHEN THEY'RE IN TROUBLE, ASTRO. THEY REALLY THINK OF IT AS A PLACE TO TAKE SHELTER...
BUT THE RING-MASTER'LL COME AFTER ME, RIGHT?
DON'T WORRY...
I HEAR THE SOUND OF A CAR!
SCREECH
'SCUSE ME! PRO-FESSOR OCHAN-OMIZU HOME?
I'M HAMEGG, SIR, THE CIRCUS RINGMASTER!
WE'RE LOOKING FOR A LOST ROBOT...
OH, REALLY?
I'VE HEARD YOUR PLACE IS A REFUGE FOR ROBOTS, SIR...
...AND I THOUGHT HE MIGHT'VE SOUGHT SHELTER HERE...
NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF...

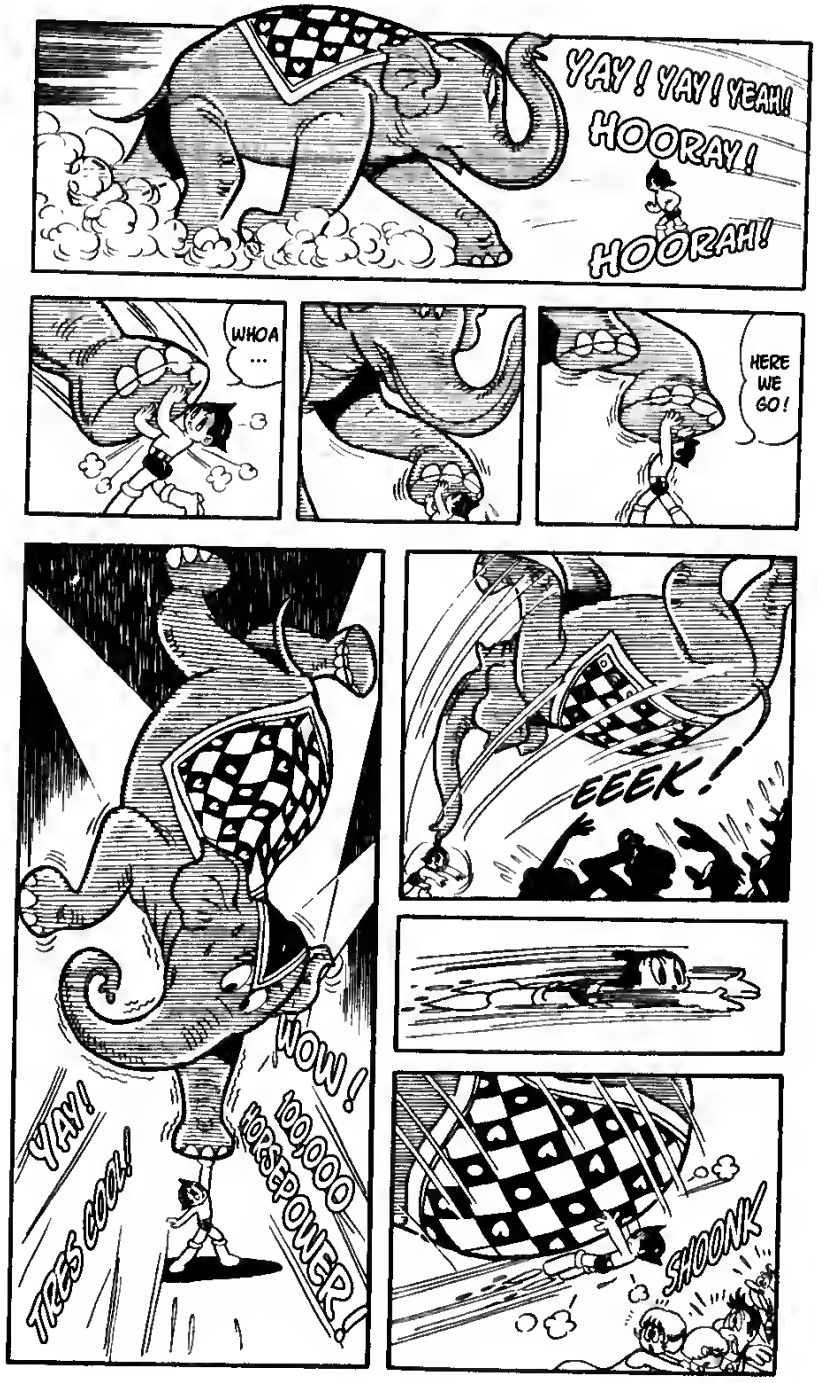
HE'S CALLED "ASTRO BOY"...
AND I'VE GOT A HUNCH HE'S HERE...
HMPH ...
SO HAND HIM OVER, POPS, OR ELSE!
DON'T TOUCH MY NOSE!!
NOW, NOW... NO VIOLENCE...
LOOK ASTRO WAS MADE AT THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE...
...AND I'VE LEASED HIM FOLLOWING FULLY LEGAL PROCEDURES...
HERE'RE THE DOCUMENTS!
SO I WANT HIM HANDED OVER NOW!
HAH HAH! DOCUMENTS! THAT'S A GOOD ONE!
LET ME SEE THOSE ...
HMPH.
OKAY, ASTRO! COME ON OUT!

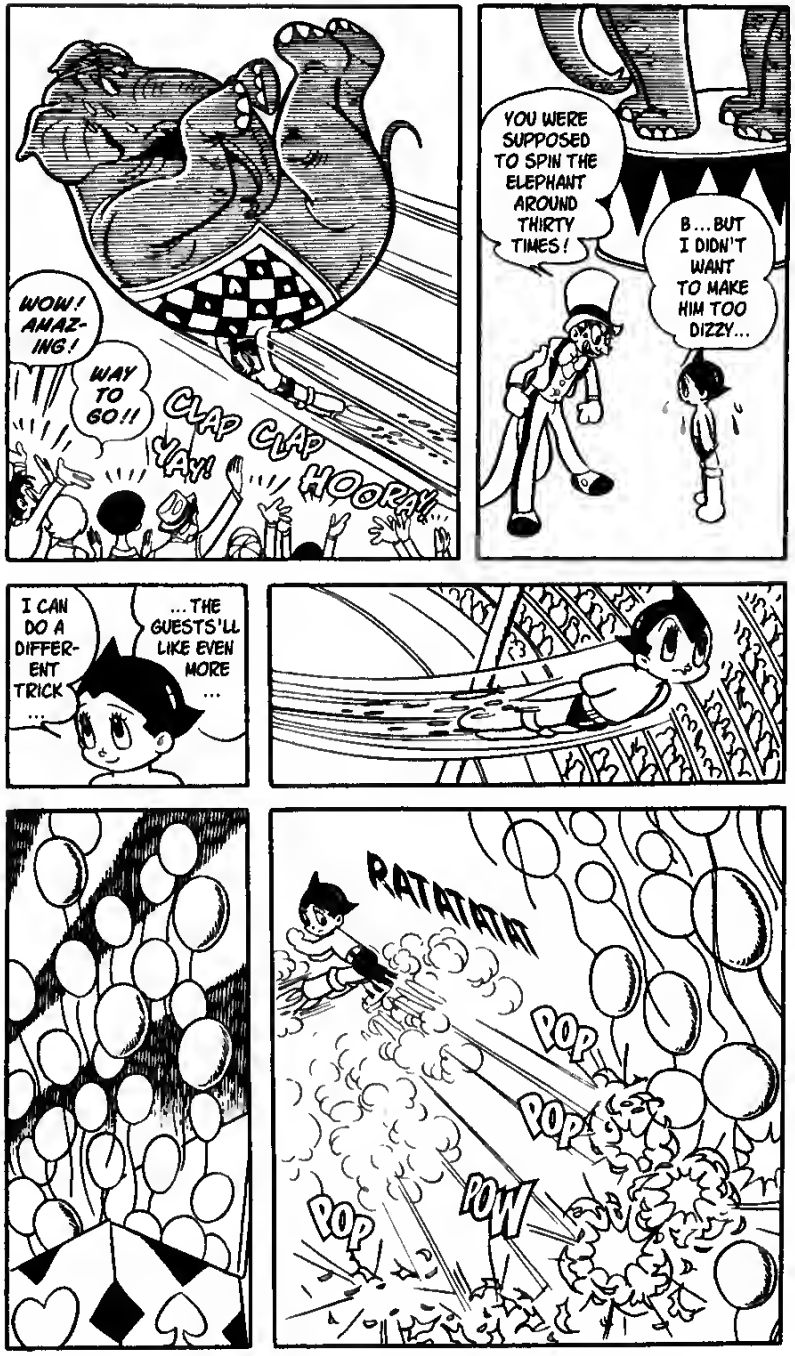
ASTRO!
SO YOU WERE HERE! TIME TO GO BACK TO THE CIRCUS, SONNY!
NOT SO FAST!
ACCORDING TO THOSE DOCUMENTS, ASTRO'S NOT A HUMAN, BUT A PIECE OF PROPERTY.
OF COURSE! ROBOTS AREN'T HUMANS!
WELL, IN THAT CASE I FOUND SOMETHING CALLED "ASTRO," THAT YOU LOST...
SO WHAT?
SO I'M ENTITLED TO A REWARD, RIGHT?
I'VE GOT THIS LITTLE DOCUMENT FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT HERE...
SO PLEASE EXCUSE ME...
BUT I'LL TAKE THE ELECTRO-BRAIN AND THE ATOMIC ENGINE IN ASTRO'S CHEST...
WHAT?!!
ACCORDING TO THE LOST AND FOUND LAW, I'M ENTITLED TO 1/10TH OF ANY PROPERTY I ACCIDENTALLY FIND...

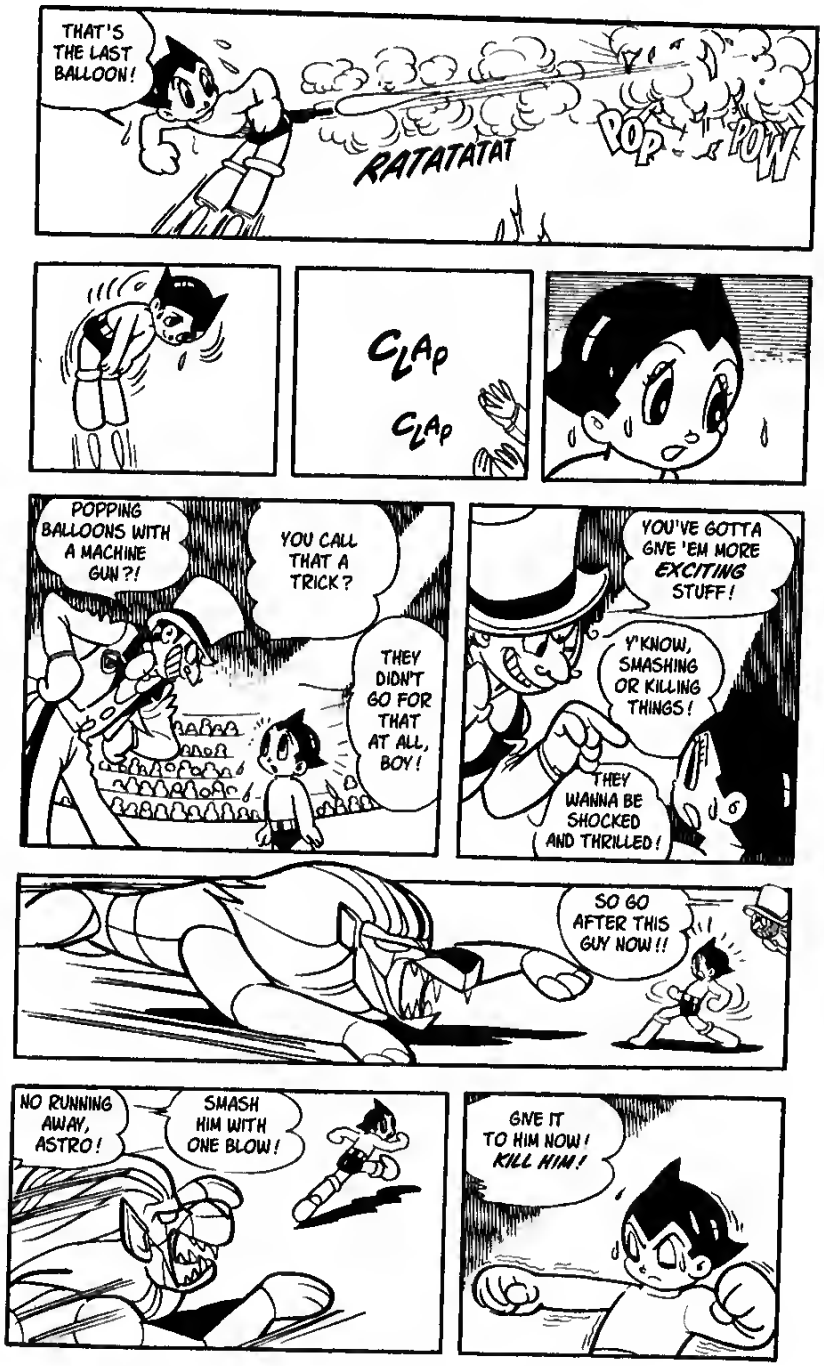
B...BUT IF YOU DO THAT ASTRO WON'T WORK!!
WELL, YOU WERE SHOWING ME YOUR DOCUMENTS, SO I'M SHOWING YOU MINE!
ASTRO'S GOING TO LIVE WITH ME HERE FOR A WHILE...
I'LL LEAVE YOU FOR NOW, PROFESSOR...
BUT I DON'T GIVE UP EASILY...
SCOUNDRELS LIKE THAT HAVE TO BE DEALT WITH FIRMLY...
SO, ASTRO... FEEL BETTER NOW?
YEAH! WHAT A RELIEF!
I'VE BEEN MAKING ROBOTS NOW FOR THIRTY YEARS, ASTRO, HELPING TO BRING THEM TO LIFE. I PRETTY MUCH KNOW HOW ROBOTS THINK..
GOSH, I THINK YOU'RE GREAT, PROFESSOR...
RRRIINGG
IS ASTRO BOY THERE?
NIS MOTHER'S BADLY INJURED AND SHE'S IN THE HOSPITAL...
WHAT?!

WHAT?! MY MOTHER'S HURT?
YES, SHE WAS HIT BY A CAR AND IS IN THE INSTANT HOSPITAL. COME RIGHT AWAY!
I'VE GOTTA GO RIGHT NOW...
WAIT, ASTRO!
WAIT, ASTRO, WAIT!
I CAN'T WAIT! I'LL BE LATE...
GOSH, I HOPE MAMA'S OKAY...
INSTANT HOSPITAL
SURE IS A WEIRD-LOOKING HOSPITAL...
MAMA... WHA?!
WELL, WELL, WELL! WHAT A LOYAL SON!
IT WAS ALL A TRICK TO GET YOU HERE, ASTRO!
SO SHE'S OKAY?!
WHAT A RELIEF!
NOT SO FAST... YOU'RE NOT GOING ANYWHERE...
IN FACT, YOU'LL NEVER LEAVE AGAIN!

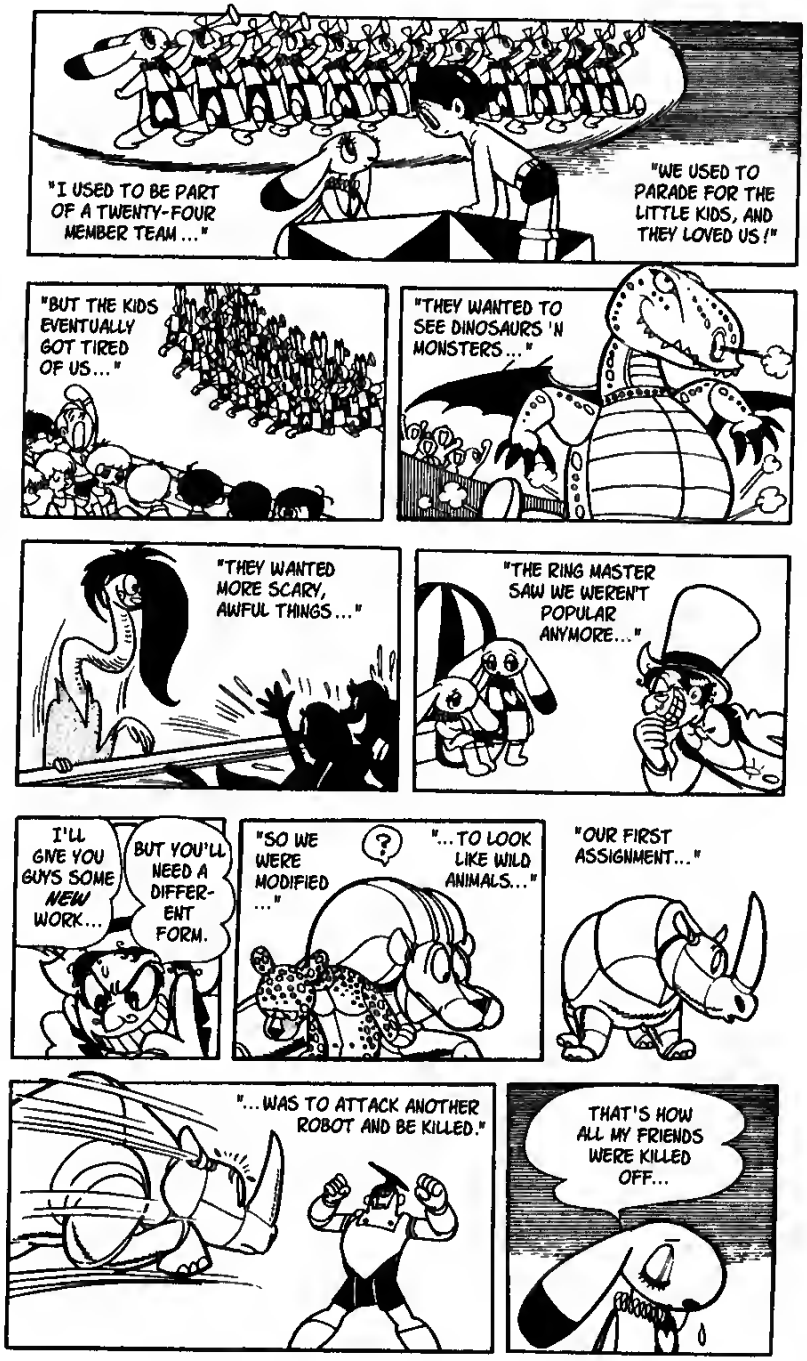

HELLO? PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU? THIS IS HAMEGG, THE RINGMASTER...
ASTRO'S COME BACK...
NO, HE'S OKAY... THANKS FOR ALL YOUR HELP...
HE SAYS HE WON'T BOTHER YOU ANYMORE
SLAM!
ANYONE WHO BETRAYS A PURE-HEARTED ROBOT LIKE THAT..
IS EVIL!
THIS SORT OF TRAGEDY'LL HAPPEN OVER 'N OVER ...
...UNLESS ROBOTS ARE GRANTED HUMAN RIGHTS...
COME ONE, COME ALL, TO THE GREATEST ROBOT SHOW ON EARTH!
ROBOT CIRCUS
SEE ASTRO, THE ROBOT BOY WITH 100,000 HORSEPOWER AND SEVEN SPECIAL POWERS!
YAY! YAY! HOORAY!
YEAH! HOORAH!


YAY! YAY! YEAH! HOORAY! HOORAH!
WHOA...
HERE WE GO!
EEEK!
YAY! IT'S GOOD!
WOW! 100,000 HORSEPOWER!
SHOONK

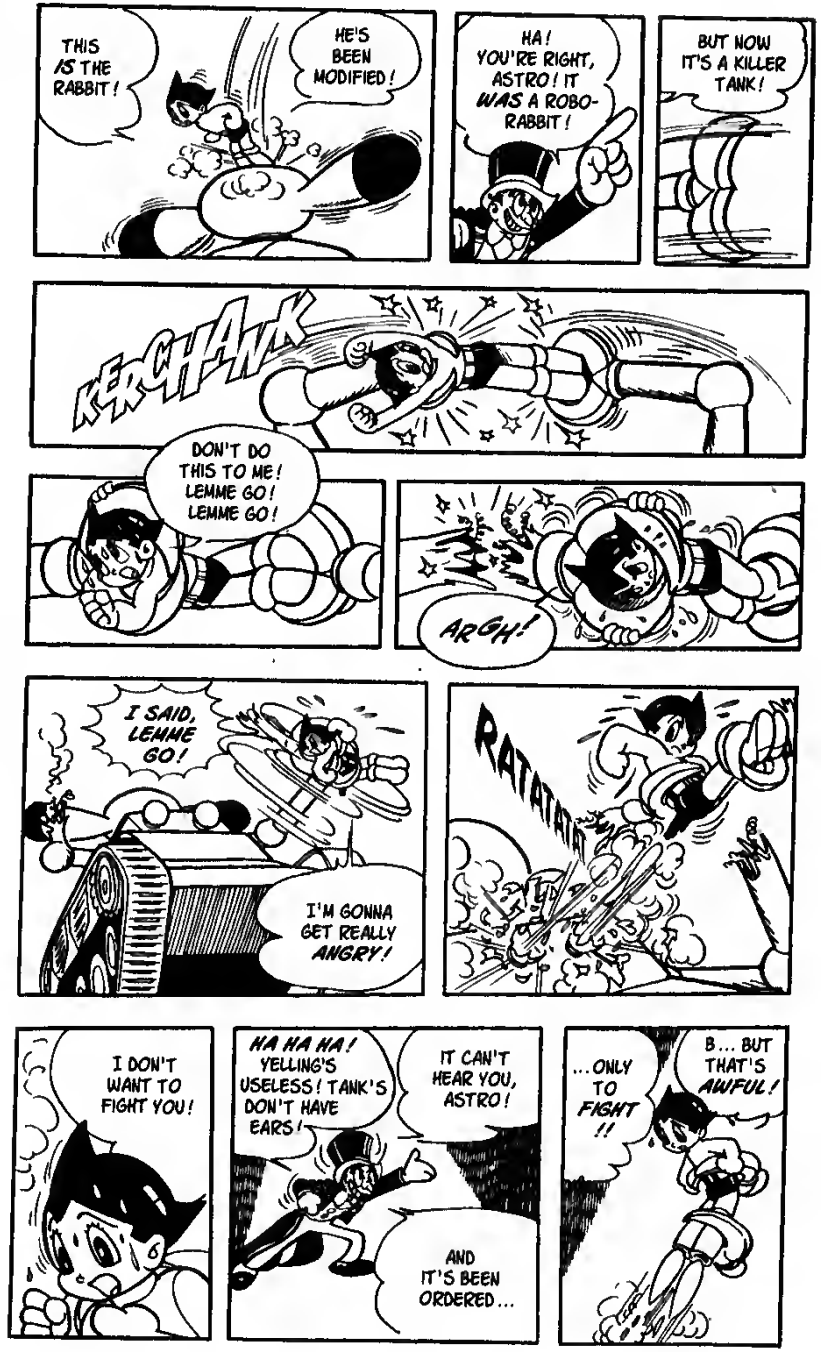

WOW! AMAZING!
WAY TO GO!!
CLAP CLAP
YAY!
HOORAY!
YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO SPIN THE ELEPHANT AROUND THIRTY TIMES!
B...BUT I DIDN'T WANT TO MAKE HIM TOO DIZZY...
I CAN DO A DIFFERENT TRICK ...
...THE GUESTS'LL LIKE EVEN MORE ...
RATATATAT
POP
POP
POW
POP

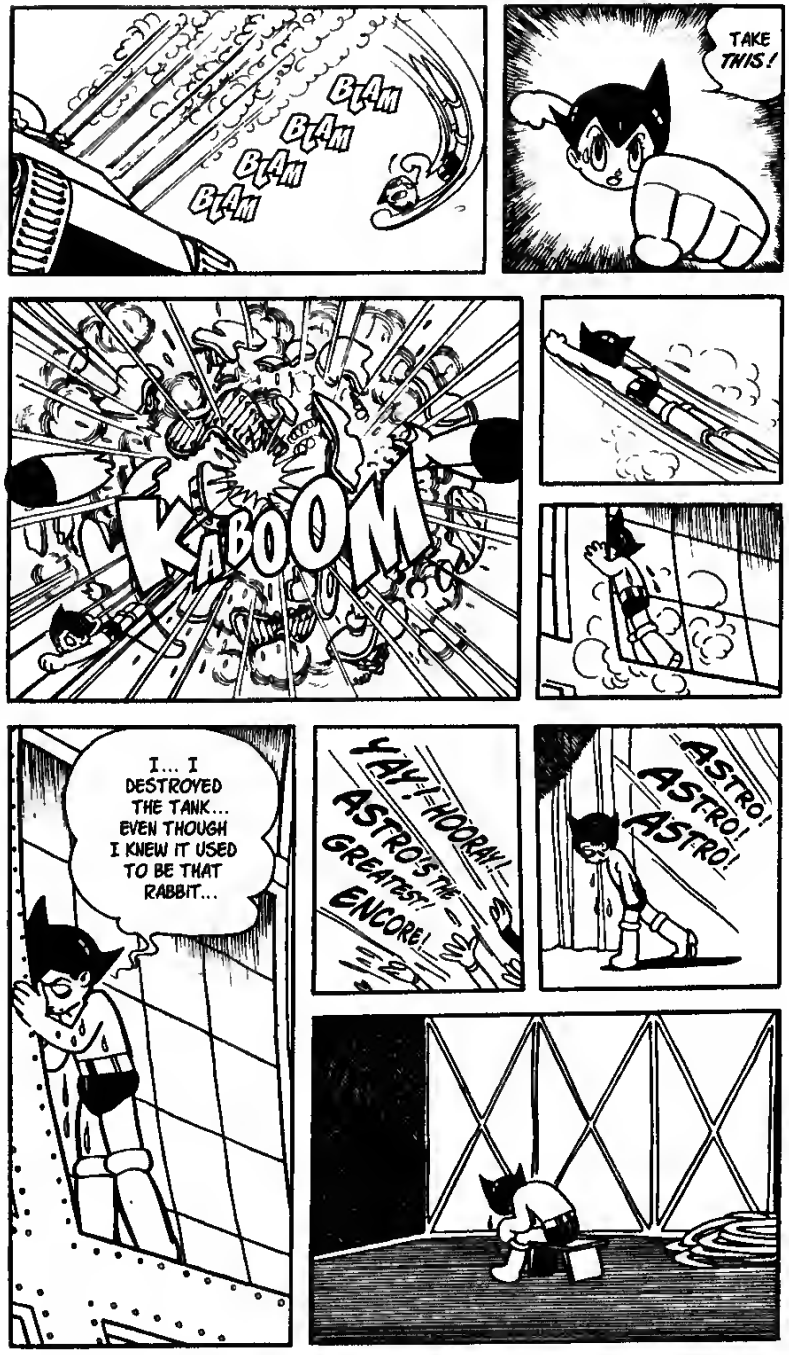

THAT'S THE LAST BALLOON!
RATATATAT
POP!
POW
CLAP
CLAP
POPPING BALLOONS WITH A MACHINE GUN?!
YOU CALL THAT A TRICK?
THEY DIDN'T GO FOR THAT AT ALL, BOY!
YOU'VE GOTTA GIVE 'EM MORE EXCITING STUFF!
Y'KNOW, SMASHING OR KILLING THINGS!
THEY WANNA BE SHOCKED AND THRILLED!
SO GO AFTER THIS GUY NOW!!
NO RUNNING AWAY, ASTRO!
SMASH HIM WITH ONE BLOW!
GIVE IT TO HIM NOW! KILL HIM!

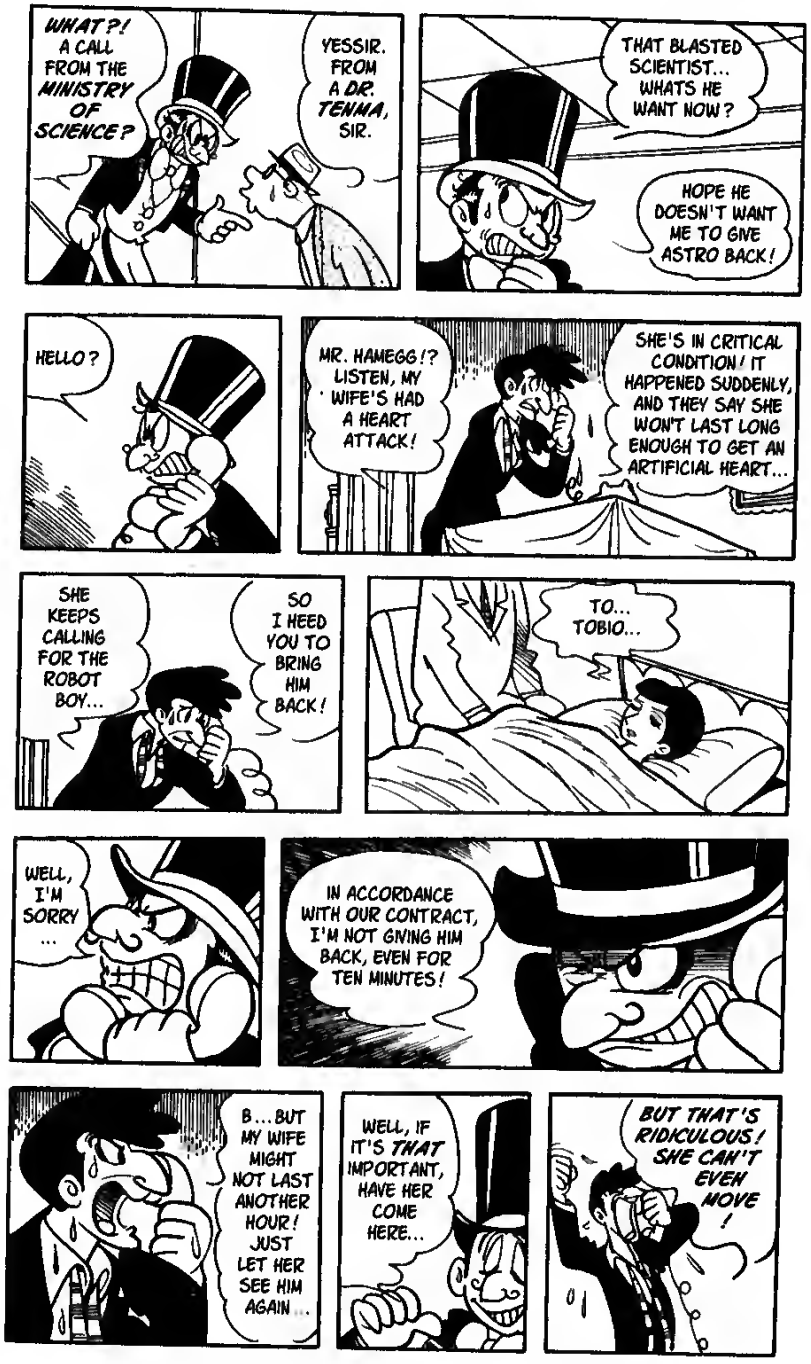
SMASH
WAY TA GO!
BRAVO! BRAVO!
THAT'S THE STUFF!
YAY!
HOORAY!
ASTRO ...
DON'T DO THAT ANYMORE, OKAY?
WHO ARE YOU? A RABBIT?
I'M A ROBO-RABBIT.
THE ROBO-LION YOU SMASHED TODAY WAS MY PAL...


"I USED TO BE PART OF A TWENTY-FOUR MEMBER TEAM..."
"WE USED TO PARADE FOR THE LITTLE KIDS, AND THEY LOVED US!"
"BUT THE KIDS EVENTUALLY GOT TIRED OF US..."
"THEY WANTED TO SEE DINOSAURS 'N MONSTERS..."
"THEY WANTED MORE SCARY, AWFUL THINGS..."
"THE RING MASTER SAW WE WEREN'T POPULAR ANYMORE..."
I'LL GIVE YOU GUYS SOME NEW WORK...
BUT YOU'LL NEED A DIFFERENT FORM.
"SO WE WERE MODIFIED ..."
?
"...TO LOOK LIKE WILD ANIMALS..."
"OUR FIRST ASSIGNMENT..."
"...WAS TO ATTACK ANOTHER ROBOT AND BE KILLED."
THAT'S HOW ALL MY FRIENDS WERE KILLED OFF...

MY LAST FRIEND WAS CHANGED INTO A LION. HE'S THE ONE WHO ATTACKED YOU TODAY...
YOU MEAN THAT LION WAS ORIGINALLY A RABBIT?
YUP. HE DIDN'T WANT TO ATTACK YOU.
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT...
DON'T WORRY, I'LL NEVER DO THAT AGAIN...
LAAADIES AND GENTS! TODAY WE FEATURE ASTRO BOY GOING ONE-ON-ONE WITH A TANK! WILL ASTRO WIN? OR WILL IT BE THE TANK?
CLANK
RUMBLE
CLANK
RUMBLE
CLANK
RUMBLE
CLANK
THIS TANK LOOKS LIKE A RABBIT!
SMASH

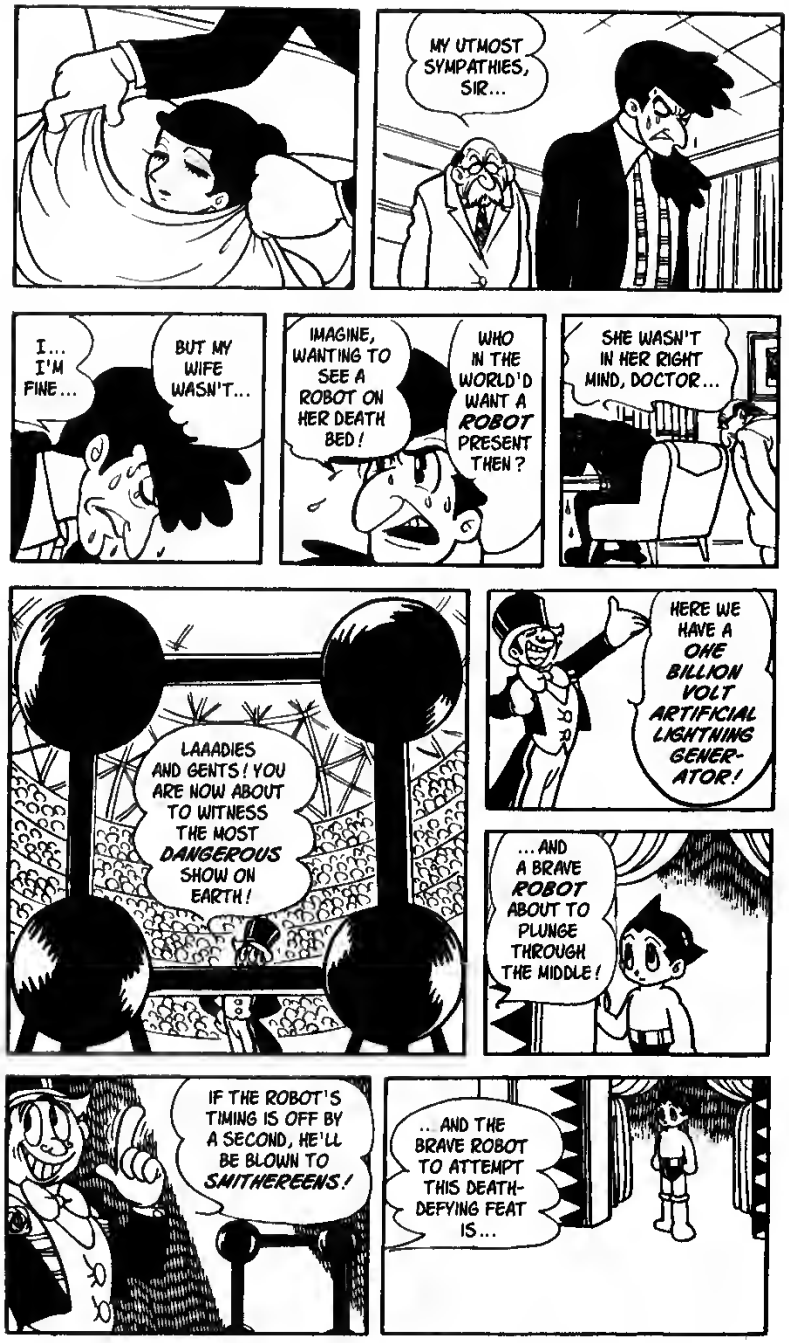

THIS IS THE RABBIT!
HE'S BEEN MODIFIED!
HA! YOU'RE RIGHT, ASTRO! IT WAS A ROBO-RABBIT!
BUT NOW IT'S A KILLER TANK!
KERCHANK
DON'T DO THIS TO ME! LEMME GO! LEMME GO!
ARGH!
I SAID, LEMME GO!
I'M GONNA GET REALLY ANGRY!
RATATATA
I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU!
HA HA HA! YELLING'S USELESS! TANK'S DON'T HAVE EARS!
IT CAN'T HEAR YOU, ASTRO!
AND IT'S BEEN ORDERED...
...ONLY TO FIGHT!!
B... BUT THAT'S AWFUL!


BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
BLAM
TAKE THIS!
KABOOM
I... I DESTROYED THE TANK... EVEN THOUGH I KNEW IT USED TO BE THAT RABBIT...
YAY!-HOORAY! ASTRO'S THE GREATEST! ENCORE!
ASTRO! ASTRO! ASTRO!

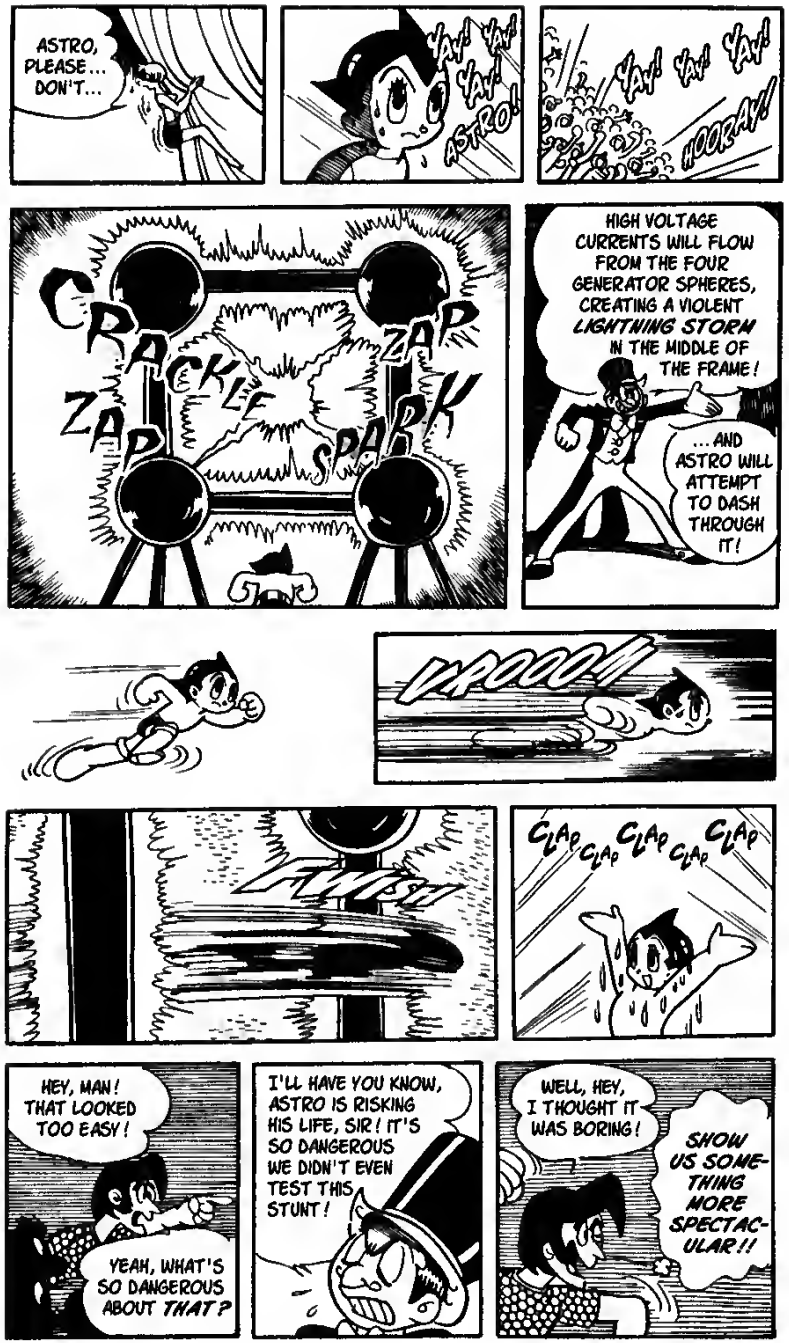

WHAT?! A CALL FROM THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE?
YESSIR. FROM A DR. TENMA, SIR.
THAT BLASTED SCIENTIST... WHATS HE WANT NOW?
HOPE HE DOESN'T WANT ME TO GIVE ASTRO BACK!
HELLO?
MR. HAMEGG!? LISTEN, MY WIFE'S HAD A HEART ATTACK!
SHE'S IN CRITICAL CONDITION! IT HAPPENED SUDDENLY, AND THEY SAY SHE WON'T LAST LONG ENOUGH TO GET AN ARTIFICIAL HEART...
SHE KEEPS CALLING FOR THE ROBOT BOY...
SO I NEED YOU TO BRING HIM BACK!
TO... TOBIO...
WELL, I'M SORRY ...
IN ACCORDANCE WITH OUR CONTRACT, I'M NOT GIVING HIM BACK, EVEN FOR TEN MINUTES!
B...BUT MY WIFE MIGHT NOT LAST ANOTHER HOUR! JUST LET HER SEE HIM AGAIN...
WELL, IF IT'S THAT IMPORTANT, HAVE HER COME HERE...
BUT THAT'S RIDICULOUS! SHE CAN'T EVEN MOVE!

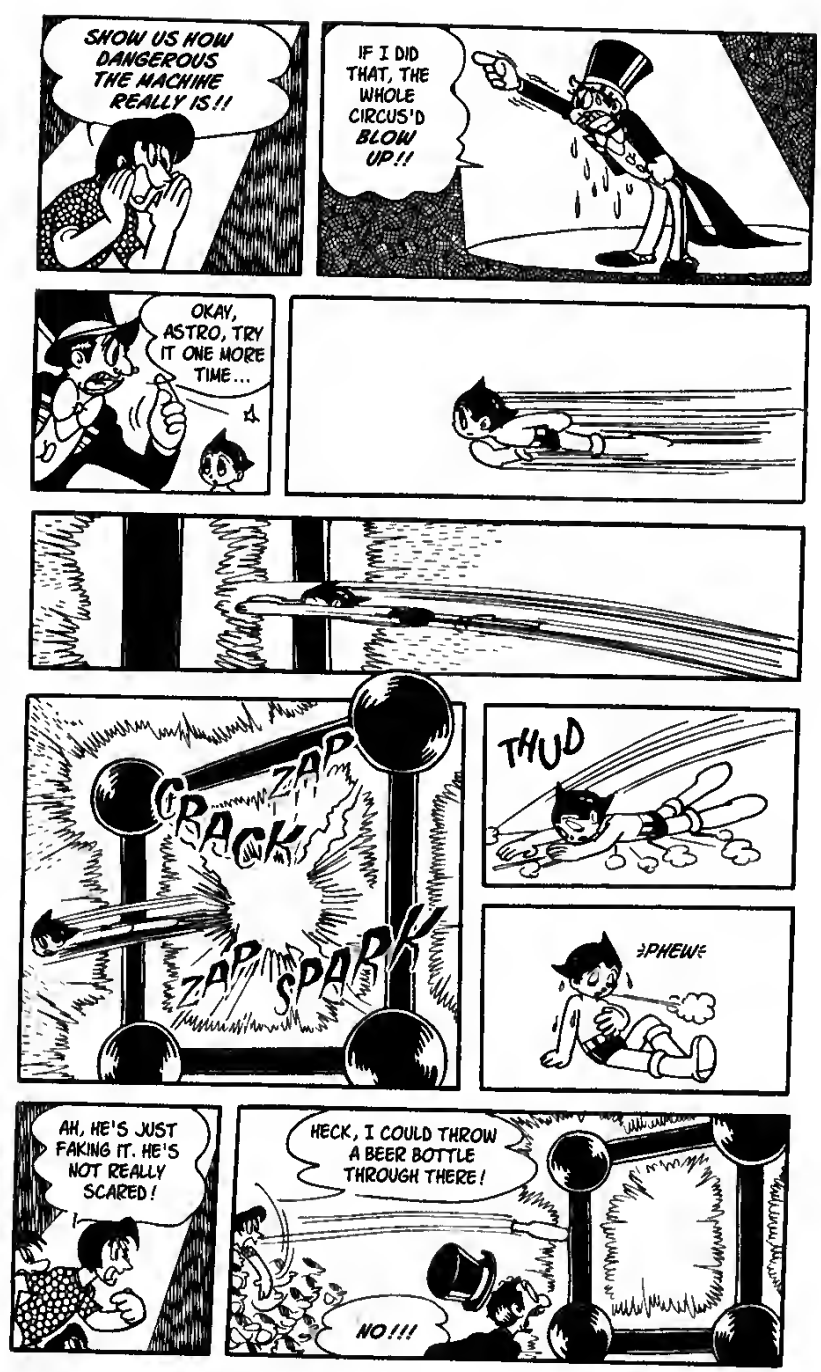
HMPH! HE'S GOT A LOT OF NERVE!
SLAM
HE WANTS ASTRO TO SEE NIS MOTHER ON HER DEATH BED...
ASTRO'S MOTHER?
CAN YOU IMAGIHE ?!
DON'T TELL ASTRO, OKAY? HE'D GO THERE IN A FLASH IF HE KNEW...
OKAY, BOSS..
TO... TOBI... O...
TOBIO...
SHE'S UNCONSCIOUS, BUT SHE KEEPS CALLING TNAT NAME...
NANG ON, DEAR... CAN YOU HEAR ME?
I'M GOING TO GET TOBIO!
IF YOU LEAVE NOW, SIR, SHE MIGHT NOT LAST TIL YOU COME BACK...
B...BUT DOCTOR, I'VE GOT TO BRING NIM HERE!
COULDN'T SOMEONE ELSE GET NIM?
NO.
THE RING-MASTER WON'T NAND NIM OVER TO ANYONE ELSE...
TOBIO... WHERE ARE YOU?
....
....
WNAT ABOUT THE ARTIFICIAL HEART WE ORDERED?
IT'LL TAKE ANOTHER NOUR, SIR...

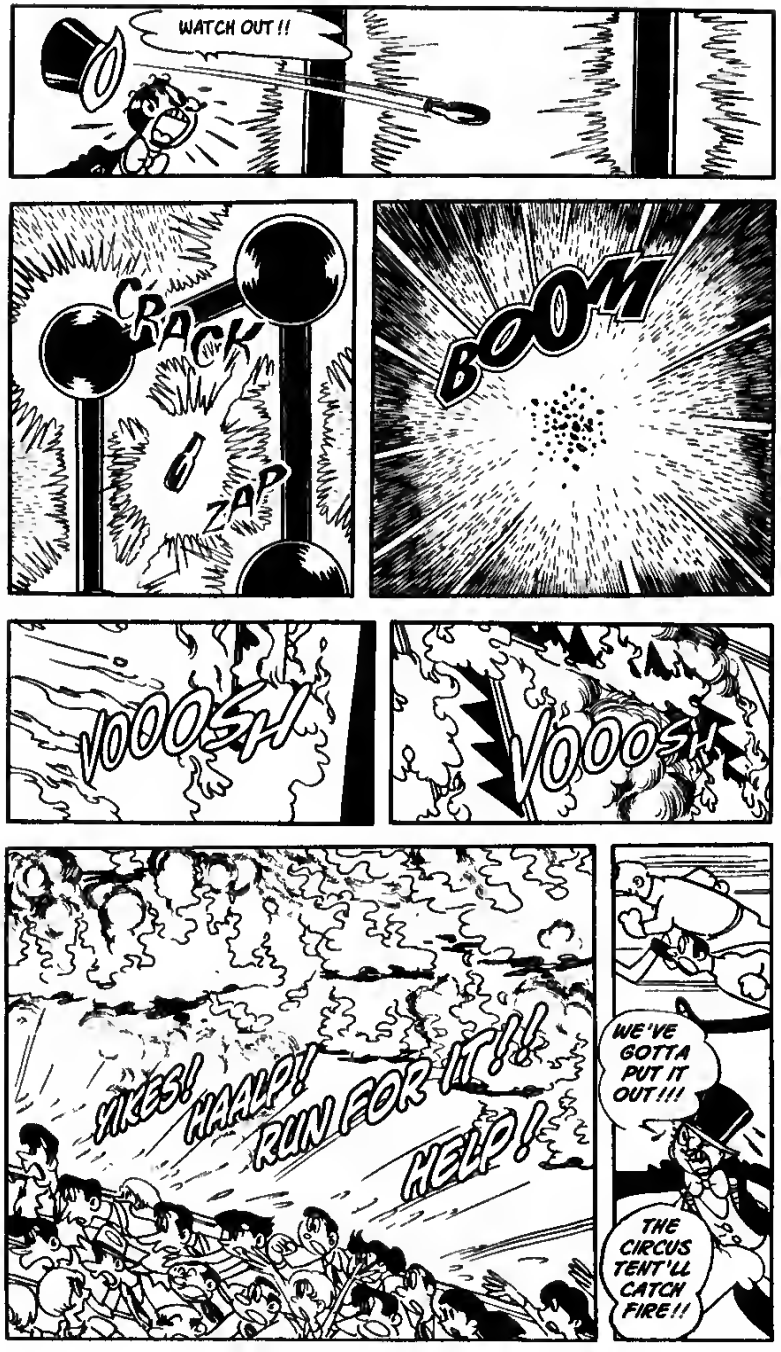
ASTRO'S MOTHER... IN CRITICAL CONDITION...
DR. TEHMA MIGHT COME HERE ANY MINUTE. DON'T LET ASTRO SEE HIM! I DON'T WANT HIM TO KNOW ABOUT HIS MOTHER!
OOPS.
MR. RING-MASTER, SIR? DID SOMETNING NAPPEN TO MY MOTHER?
HEY, WE WERE TALKING ABOUT HIS MOTHER, NOT YOURS!
UN, TNAT'S RIGHT! HER... UM... BRAIN'S GOT TINEA AND HER FEET'VE GOT NEURAL ANEMIA...
HEY, YOUR MOM'S FINE! SHE'S YOUNG AND HEALTHY!
ON...
SHE NAS NOW BREATHED HER LAST.
DEAR...
OH MY GOD...

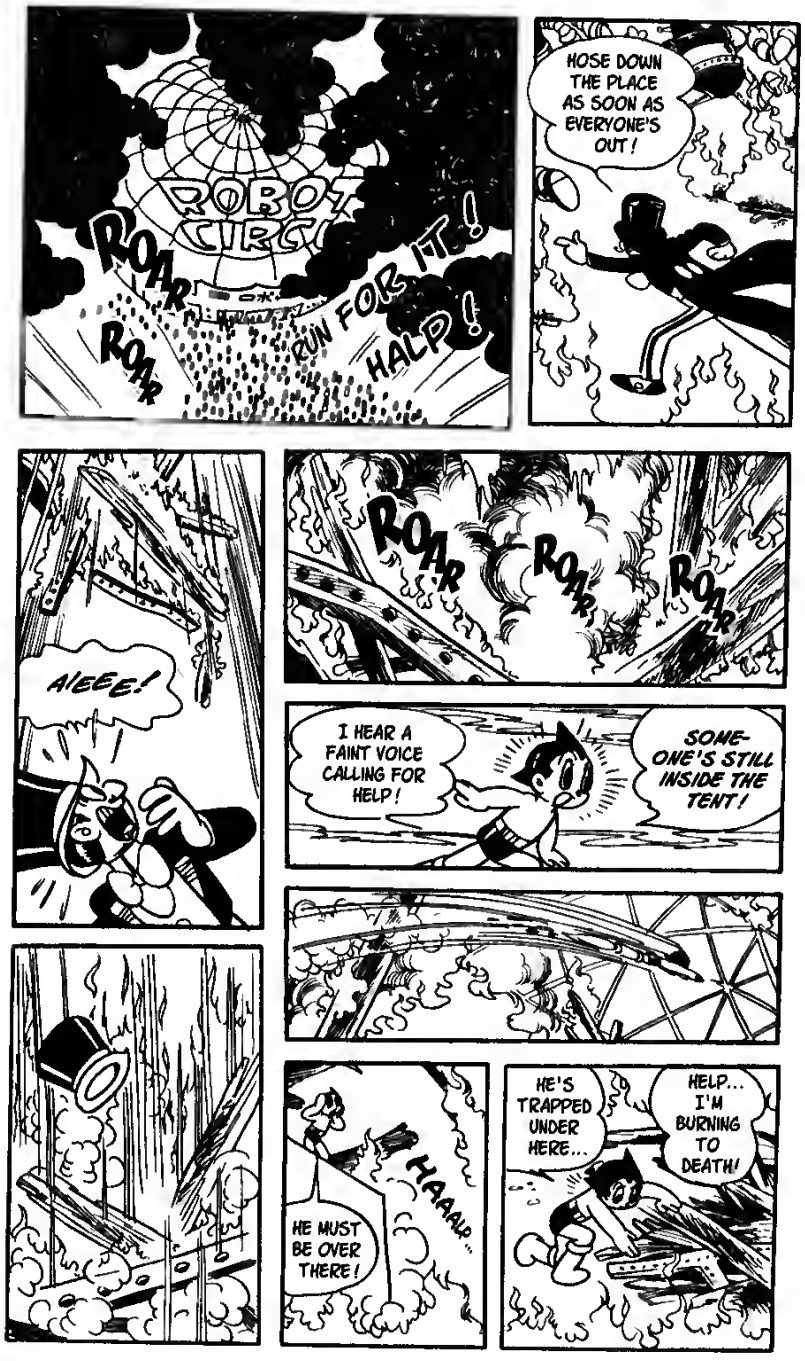

MY UTMOST SYMPATHIES, SIR...
I... I'M FINE...
BUT MY WIFE WASN'T...
IMAGINE, WANTING TO SEE A ROBOT ON HER DEATH BED!
WHO IN THE WORLD'D WANT A ROBOT PRESENT THEN?
SHE WASN'T IN HER RIGHT MIND, DOCTOR...
LAAADIES AND GENTS! YOU ARE NOW ABOUT TO WITNESS THE MOST DANGEROUS SHOW ON EARTH!
HERE WE HAVE A ONE BILLION VOLT ARTIFICIAL LIGHTNING GENERATOR!
...AND A BRAVE ROBOT ABOUT TO PLUNGE THROUGH THE MIDDLE!
IF THE ROBOT'S TIMING IS OFF BY A SECOND, HE'LL BE BLOWN TO SMITHEREENS!
..AND THE BRAVE ROBOT TO ATTEMPT THIS DEATH-DEFYING FEAT IS...

...THE MOST POPULAR ROBOT IN OUR CIRCUS, THE ROBOT OF THE CENTURY, ASTRO BOY!!
ASTRO! STOP! DON'T TRY IT!
ONE MISTAKE AND IT'LL BE A DIS-ASTER!
NOBODY'S EVEN TESTED THAT CONTRAP-TION! IT'S TOO DANGEROUS!
LEAVE ME ALONE! I'M FINE!
NO, ASTRO! ONE MISSTEP AND YOU'LL BE DES-TROYED!
ASTRO! COME ON OUT AND GREET THE CROWD!
WHAT'S THE MATTER? LOST YOUR NERVE?
I'M COM-ING!
GIVE IT TO 'EM!
WE'RE COUNT-ING ON YA!
YAY, ASTRO!
YAY! YAY! YAY! YAY!
CLAP CLAP CLAP
AND NOW... TURN ON THE POWER!!
ZAP
ZAP
ZAP
CRACKLE


ASTRO, PLEASE... DON'T...
Ya! Ya! Ya! ASTRO!
Ya! Ya! Ya! HOOSH!
CRACKLE
ZAP
ZAP
SPARK
HIGH VOLTAGE CURRENTS WILL FLOW FROM THE FOUR GENERATOR SPHERES, CREATING A VIOLENT LIGHTNING STORM IN THE MIDDLE OF THE FRAME!
... AND ASTRO WILL ATTEMPT TO DASH THROUGH IT!
VROOM!
CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP
HEY, MAN! THAT LOOKED TOO EASY!
YEAH, WHAT'S SO DANGEROUS ABOUT THAT?
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW, ASTRO IS RISKING HIS LIFE, SIR! IT'S SO DANGEROUS WE DIDN'T EVEN TEST THIS STUNT!
WELL, HEY, I THOUGHT IT WAS BORING!
SHOW US SOMETHING MORE SPECTACULAR!!

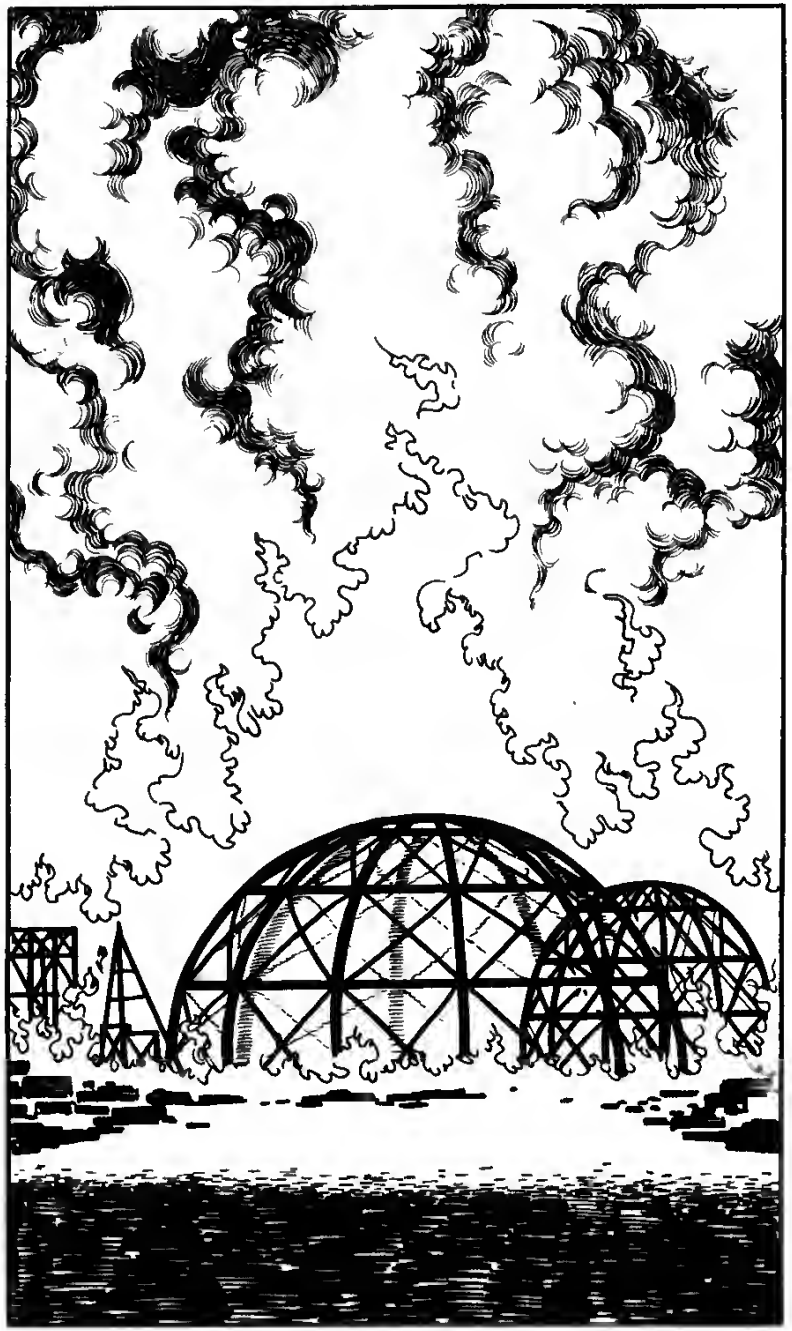

SHOW US HOW DANGEROUS THE MACHINE REALLY IS!!
IF I DID THAT, THE WHOLE CIRCUS'D BLOW UP!!
OKAY, ASTRO, TRY IT ONE MORE TIME...
CRACK
ZAP
ZAP
SPARK
THUD
PHEW
AH, HE'S JUST FAKING IT. HE'S NOT REALLY SCARED!
HECK, I COULD THROW A BEER BOTTLE THROUGH THERE!
NO!!!

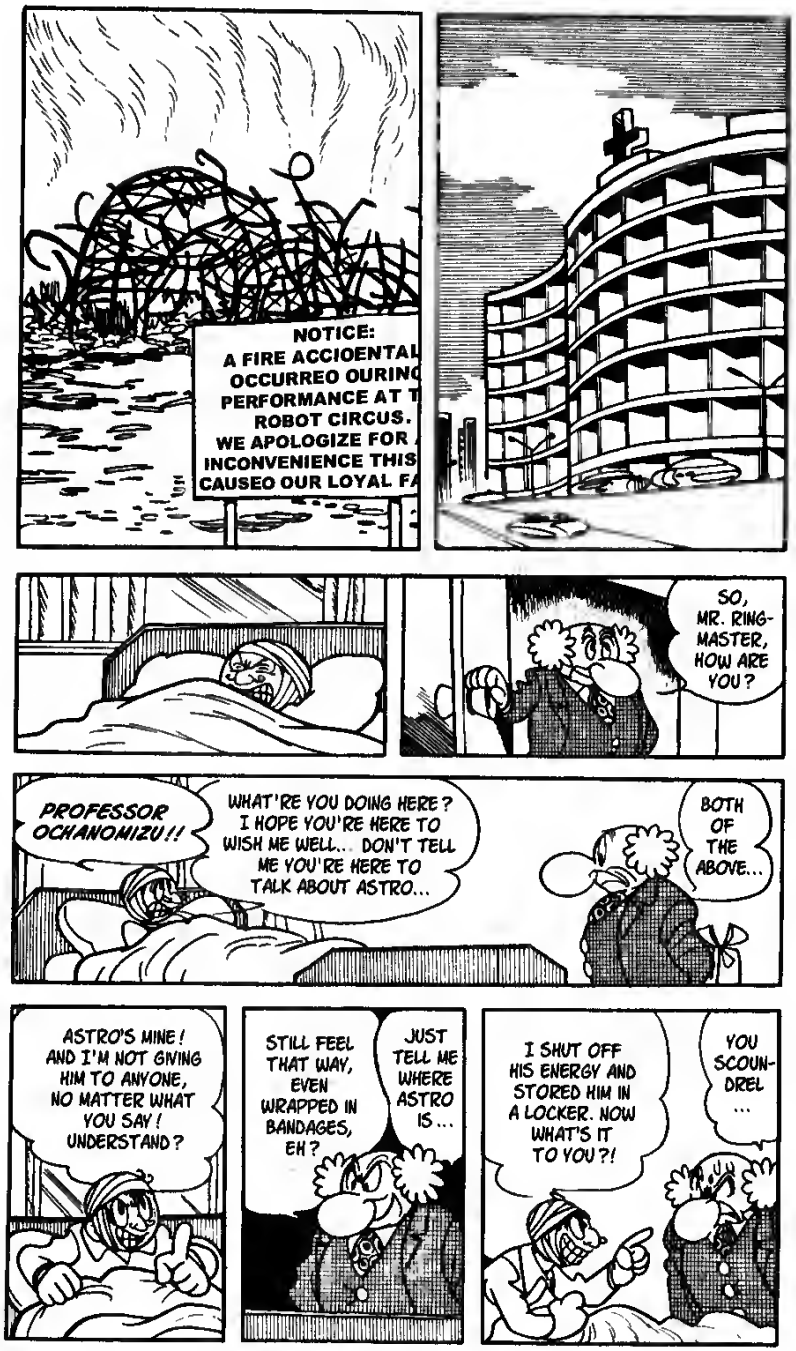

WATCH OUT !!
CRACK
ZAP
BOOM
VOOOSH!
VOOOSH
YIKES! HAALP! RUN FOR IT!!!
HELP!
WE'VE GOTTA PUT IT OUT!!!
THE CIRCUS TENT'LL CATCH FIRE!!

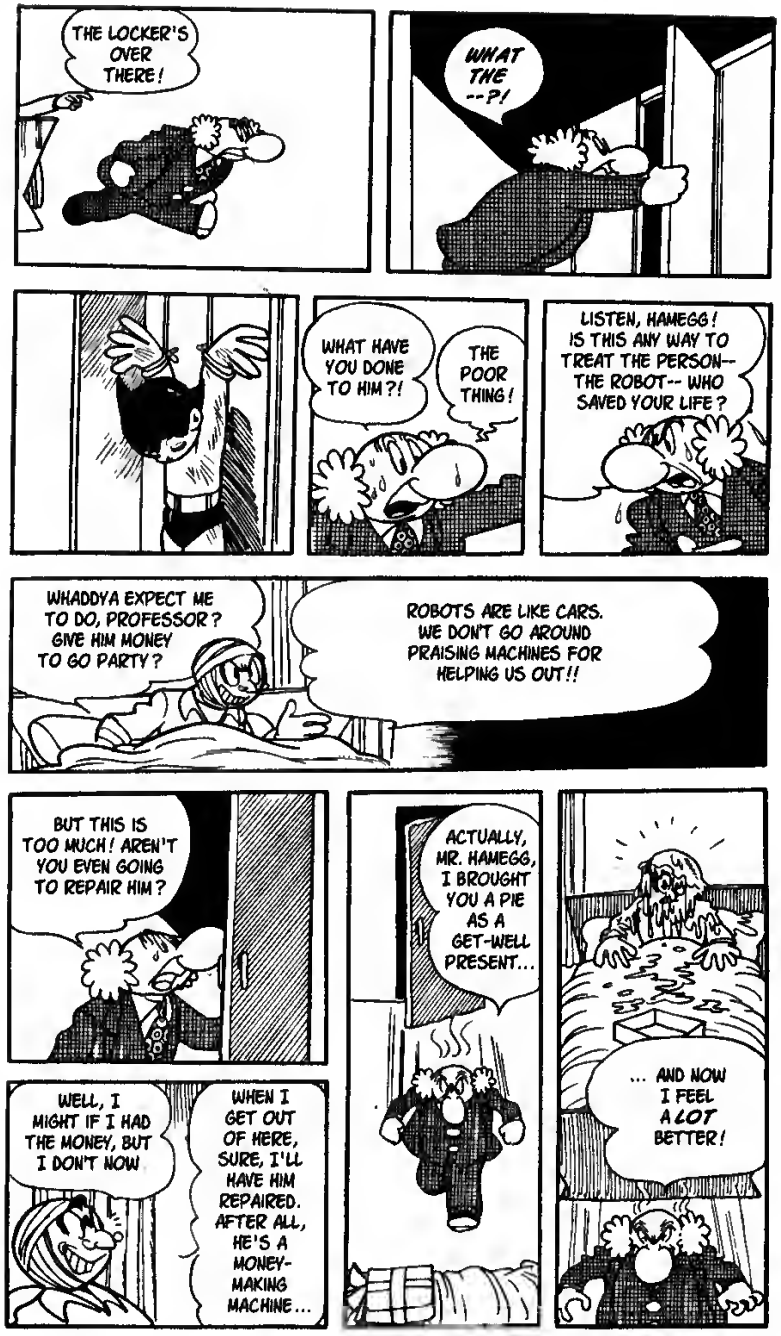

ROAR
ROAR
RUN FOR IT!
HALP!
HOSE DOWN THE PLACE AS SOON AS EVERYONE'S OUT!
AIEEE!
ROAR
ROAR
ROAR
I HEAR A FAINT VOICE CALLING FOR HELP!
SOME-ONE'S STILL INSIDE THE TENT!
HAAAAP...
HE MUST BE OVER THERE!
HE'S TRAPPED UNDER HERE...
HELP... I'M BURNING TO DEATH!

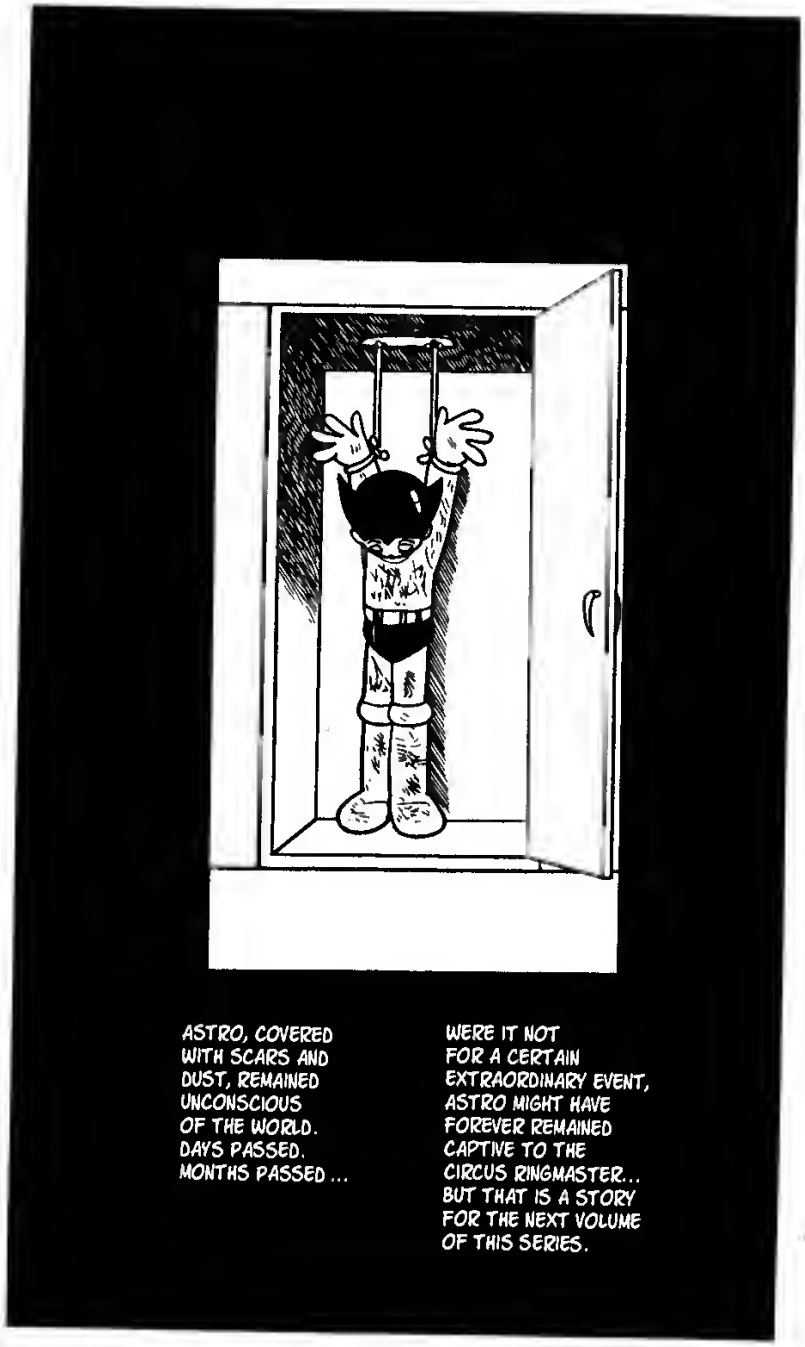
HAAALP.
OW! OW! OW! HURRY, GET ME OUT!
DON'T MOVE, OR THESE BEAMS'LL COLLAPSE!
MR. RING-MASTER...
ARGH ...
OWWW!
HACK!...
EASY DOES IT...
HANG ON TIGHT TO ME...
WE'RE GOING TO FLY...

I'LL CALL AN AMBU-LANCE...
ASTRO... WAIT...
DON'T SAY THAT AND JUST RUN AWAY, OK?
RUN AWAY? I'M NOT RUNNING AWAY!
D...DON'T RUN AWAY, ASTRO! I'VE GOT THE DOCUMENTS...
I'M NOT RUNNING! I'M GOING TO CALL AN AMBULANCE!
THE CON-TRACT ...
LEAST IT DIDN'T BURN UP...
LONG AS I'VE GOT THIS YOU'LL ALWAYS BE MINE!
UNHHH ...
I... I'M... OUT OF ENERGY...
SOMEONE... HELP... AN INJURED MAN'S... OVER THERE...




NOTICE:
A FIRE ACCIOENTAL
OCCURREO OURINC
PERFORMANCE AT T
ROBOT CIRCUS.
WE APOLOGIZE FOR
INCONVENIENCE THIS
CAUSEO OUR LOYAL FA
SO, MR. RING-MASTER, HOW ARE YOU?
PROFESSOR OCHANOMIZU!!
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE? I HOPE YOU'RE HERE TO WISH ME WELL... DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE HERE TO TALK ABOUT ASTRO...
BOTH OF THE ABOVE...
ASTRO'S MINE! AND I'M NOT GIVING HIM TO ANYONE, NO MATTER WHAT YOU SAY! UNDERSTAND?
STILL FEEL THAT WAY, EVEN WRAPPED IN BANDAGES, EH?
JUST TELL ME WHERE ASTRO IS...
I SHUT OFF HIS ENERGY AND STORED HIM IN A LOCKER. NOW WHAT'S IT TO YOU?!
YOU SCOUN-DREL ...


THE LOCKER'S OVER THERE!
WHAT THE --P!
WHAT HAVE YOU DONE TO HIM?!
THE POOR THING!
LISTEN, HAMEGG! IS THIS ANY WAY TO TREAT THE PERSON-- THE ROBOT-- WHO SAVED YOUR LIFE?
WHADDYA EXPECT ME TO DO, PROFESSOR? GIVE HIM MONEY TO GO PARTY?
ROBOTS ARE LIKE CARS. WE DON'T GO AROUND PRAISING MACHINES FOR HELPING US OUT!!
BUT THIS IS TOO MUCH! AREN'T YOU EVEN GOING TO REPAIR HIM?
WELL, I MIGHT IF I HAD THE MONEY, BUT I DON'T NOW
WHEN I GET OUT OF HERE, SURE, I'LL HAVE HIM REPAIRED. AFTER ALL, HE'S A MONEY-MAKING MACHINE...
ACTUALLY, MR. HAMEGG, I BROUGHT YOU A PIE AS A GET-WELL PRESENT...
... AND NOW I FEEL A LOT BETTER!


ASTRO, COVERED WITH SCARS AND DUST, REMAINED UNCONSCIOUS OF THE WORLD. DAYS PASSED. MONTHS PASSED ...
WERE IT NOT FOR A CERTAIN EXTRAORDINARY EVENT, ASTRO MIGHT HAVE FOREVER REMAINED CAPTIVE TO THE CIRCUS RINGMASTER... BUT THAT IS A STORY FOR THE NEXT VOLUME OF THIS SERIES.